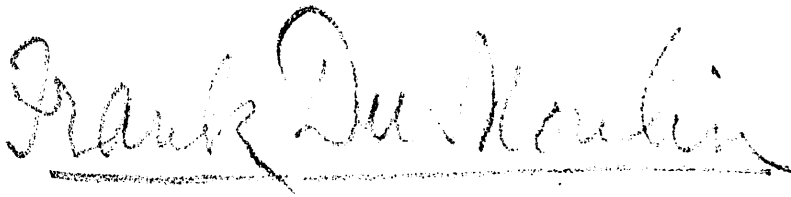

O MEN OF GOD!

Lift high the cross of Christ!
Tread where his feet have trod,
As brothers of the Son of Man
Rise up, O men of God!

—WILLIAM PIERSON MERRILL.

O MEN OF GOD!

BY

BERNARD IDDINGS BELL, LITT. D.,

CANON OF PROVIDENCE, U.S.A.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
THE BISHOP OF LONDON

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
LONDON :: NEW YORK :: TORONTO

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO. LTD.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4
6 OLD COURT HOUSE STREET, CALCUTTA
53 NICOL ROAD, BOMBAY
36A MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
114 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
221 EAST 20TH STREET, CHICAGO
88 TREMONT STREET, BOSTON

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
480 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, TORONTO

First published, January, 1936.

Printed in Great Britain.

TO
SIDNEY DARK

INTRODUCTION

THIS IS the second time that our Lenten Book has been written by a distinguished writer from the other side of the Atlantic. The first was by Bishop Brent of blessed memory. This one is by one of the best-known preachers of the United States.

The writer goes straight to the point—"What is man that Thou are mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou visitest him?"

If man is only a clever animal, then religion goes by the board, and the writer states some solid grounds for believing that a good many hold that view to-day. If it is true, then the "successful man" is naturally that one that makes the best of this world, and is able to amass wealth and comfort, and have "a really good time". If it is not, and if man is a "praying animal", and born for higher things, then the so-called "successful man" is the worst failure possible, however rich he may be.

This is the view we have inherited from the saints and heroes of the past, and St. Augustine voiced it when he said: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee".

The writer of this book, then, rightly ridicules the idea that the late War, or anything so ephemeral, has changed the vital problems of life; on pages 54 and 55 he truly says: "As a matter of fact, there has been throughout the ages no change whatever in any of man's *essential* problems or

attitudes. Every man is born, grows up, falls in love and marries, exactly as did his forebears; he has children at his desire and tends them at his cost; he labours, on their behalf and in his personal search for satisfactions. His marriage problems are as old as man and as invariant. Even those complications introduced into sexual mating by economic difficulties are exceedingly old complications. Marriage has been difficult and subject to such delays as encourage abnormalities in every servile state, not merely in ours. The problems connected with education were venerable when Socrates spoke or Ecclesiastes wrote—and spoke and wrote as aptly as Dewey or Russell or Kilpatrick, and a great deal more clearly; and the various answers to the question of what constitutes the good life change not from generation to generation."

I have found the same in going round the Universities of the United States and the public schools of England. The young people ask me the same questions they asked me thirty years ago, and in all essentials their problems remain the same. But the danger is that they should be led to believe that Creed does not affect character. As a matter of fact, it is only too obvious to-day that when belief in Christianity is given up the moral code will quickly crumble, and, to use the simile from *Alice in Wonderland*, quoted to me by a clever lawyer once: "Not for long will you have the *'grin without the cat'*."

But I believe myself with the writer, that the tide is turning. Even the secular Press are finding that religious articles are "good copy", and I am told by those who know them well that never were the young more interested in discussing religion than they are to-day, and this is borne out by the boys who besiege me with their questions at every public school which I visit. The chapter entitled

"Again toward God" is, then, justified by facts, and if only individuals and nations could be induced to look to the true Source of Life and strength, the world might be redeemed. This is well expressed on page 111:

" 'Who can bestow upon us that for want of which we perish?' That is the cry of man in all the ages, the cry that is behind all religion. 'Who can give to us a sufficient creative moral drive?'

"Jesus answers, '*I can.* I am come into this world, come from the Eternal, come that men may have life, and have it more abundantly'."

And again on page 116: "The medicine of the world is a cross—His cross *and ours*."

May the message of this book be taken to heart on both sides of the Atlantic!

A. F. LONDON.

CONTENTS

I

THE NATURE OF MAN

THE NECESSARY centrality of a true doctrine of man in the thought, and particularly the religious thought, of to-day and to-morrow, if religion is to continue to live or Christian morality to be preserved, is plain to many thoughtful people. Among these is one of the most distinguished philosophers in America, Dr. William Marshall Urban, Professor in Yale University. He is even better known in England than in his own country. Dr. Urban is not only a respected thinker but also an active Christian layman. He has for some time earnestly been advising the clergy that their primary duty is to urge upon all men everywhere a renewed respect by man for man because, he says, Christianity is bound to seem absurd to those who have an inadequate and naturalistic notion of what they themselves really are, actually can do and chiefly need. The modern world, he insists, must first recover its understanding of man (his nature, potentialities, and destiny), before it can possibly recover its lost faith in God and turn once more to live God's way.

That is sound advice. Religion has always started with a consideration by man of man himself, rather than with an abstract argument about God. Religion

soon gets to a study of God, to be sure. Man cannot long consider his own kind before he discovers that, except there be a God for whom he may search, with some hope of finding Him, and whom having found he may obey, human life comes either to despair or to what is quite as bad, an utter boredom. But in the beginning, a religion is always more concerned with human needs and longings than with thought of God's glory. It is only as men discover that their actual hungers cannot be satisfied with possessions, amusements and adulation, that they turn their thoughts to more than earth. Then, and only then, do they lift up their eyes and begin to see afar off Him whom to know is to fulfil one's destiny. Men do not seek after God to-day, chiefly because they hold themselves in an unjustly low esteem. They underestimate their own possibilities. This may be true, to some extent, of us as well as of our neighbours.

When I look into my mirror of a morning, as I shave or brush my hair, what do I see reflected there? Do I see an animal only, void of imagination, to be satisfied in a dull, bovine content? Or do I see a creature that rebels, in a way that no mere animal ever thinks of doing? Do I see one that keeps crying for the moon, asking to be loved—asking not merely for someone to embrace and be embraced by but much, much more, asking of love and lovers what an animal has no business to ask of them, and never does ask of them—asking of love and lovers joy of spirit and comradeship of soul? Do I see, gazing at me from the glass, one who understands that as long as love re-

mains on a merely physical level it is first an amusement, then a nuisance, finally an enslavement; one to whom only love which rises above the physical, transcends the physical, and often exists quite apart from the physical, can become truly significant?

Does that creature at whom I look in the mirror keep reasoning its way through life—often defectively but nevertheless rationally putting this fact and that fact together day by day, comparing them, arriving at general truths and at length discriminating values? Mere animals do not do that sort of thing, either. The higher animals can, it is true, remember; but they do not consciously plan. I can and do. An animal cannot generalize. I can and do. A dog will bring his master his master's hat which he has seen him wear. He will never bring another hat instead, although it might equally well do for the master's use. The dog knows this particular hat and that particular hat; but the concept of "hat as hat", the dog's mind cannot grasp. Mine can. Men and women can reason. They do reason. Whether they be scholars or simple folk, rich or in rags, they cannot help reasoning. That makes us all miserable, and glorious too. To an animal, a thing is a thing; but to a man, thanks to his reasoning power, everything he runs across is full of possible new truths, beauties, values; and beyond them all he gropes toward the ultimate Truth, the absolute Beauty, the completely Good. We must go this path, we human beings. We cannot help ourselves. And until we shall know perfectly what the totality is and means, until we shall understand not merely the what of

things but, even more important, the why of things as well, we shall continue, as Mr. Chesterton says, "to lay ourselves on an alien soil, whenever the day is done".[1] For we shall never be really at home until we understand.

When I look into my mirror, if what I see there is the reflection of such an one as I have just described, I must recognize that it is no mere animal I gaze upon. Although in body I am like the beasts, that which dwells within my body is unlike that which dwells in theirs. Because I can in that sense love, because I can in that sense know, I am a man, of great potential significance, competent to tower above circumstances, capable of reaching out and up until I catch a glimpse of God.

All this makes of man a creature of peculiar dignity. Never let anyone persuade us that we are of little importance, merely because our bodies are tiny things in a great universe. You may be small in size beside a mountain or beside the sea; but you can, at least a little, understand the mountain or the sea, and neither mountain nor sea can understand you. Therein, at least, you are greater than they. Compared with the starry heavens revealed by modern astronomy, a man may seem indeed insignificant; but a man can make a telescope wherewith to spy out some at least of the secrets of that orderly array of galaxies, while it, since it is only physical and without mind, cannot spy out a single one of his secrets. I, being a person, can love the physical totality, or hate

[1] "The House of Christmas," by G. K. Chesterton. *Poems*, p. 63.

it; all that it can do to me is to be coldly indifferent. We may not be as big as it is; but it is not anywhere nearly so complex or interesting as we are. We are persons; the physical universe is only a thing. Let us keep our self-respect. Size is not everything. The fact that we can love, and must; the fact that no matter how hard we may try to stop our search for meaning, that search must and will go on—the search for the Truth and the Beauty and the Goodness behind the facts: these things make human beings a peculiar creation, unique and to be honoured.

Because we have overlooked the mighty difference that there is between other animals and man, we of to-day—notwithstanding our physical improvement, our spread of education, our vast increase of information—are unhappy, discontented and mutually dangerous. A human society, to endure, must subserve human ends, ends distinct from, over and above, the ends that beasts can aim at. That is what we have forgotten. We have thought, or our fathers and older brothers did, that we of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were making here on earth a lovely Arcadia, wherein each human being could be a healthy, happy animal, where no more than that was needed. Instead of an Arcadia, as has well been said, the last generation produced an Armageddon; and now, after Armageddon, come the world revolutions.

What makes necessary or possible such revolutions as we have recently seen in Russia, in Italy, in Germany, in Austria, in Turkey—as we begin to see, at least potentially, nearer home? Hunger, say you?

Yes, hunger, "but hunger not of the baser kind that is banished with bacon and beans". Hunger, rather, for a chance to love the brethren and subserve some noble goodness at the sacrifice of one's poor self; hunger for a state and culture that will respect human souls, not so much a state and culture that will give us freedom to think and do as we please (thinking or doing as one pleases is mostly rubbish), but rather a state and culture that will hold up before us great purposes, integrating ideas, in terms of which to think and live. If anyone imagines that we can avert revolution merely by providing bread and circuses, he had better read history and learn something. Men and women, especially younger men and women, are becoming weary and a little sick of a political and economic philosophy and practice that persists in regarding them only as more shrewd animals. "Be a nice doggie," we are told. "Here is a bone to chew on—a chicken in every pot." "Be a nice doggie. Here is a neat little dog-house in a sanitary slum." "Be a nice doggie. Here is a ball to play with—a car in every garage." But *we are not dogs; we are men.* Give us something noble to love, for which to live and die. Give us truth to pursue, a sense of meaning in our days. If you will not do it or cannot do it, you who own and you who rule, know this, that we shall rise in our restlessness and wrath and rend you limb from limb. It is that sort of hunger that overthrows civilizations when they have become no longer human, no longer supernatural in sanction and aim.

We are indeed in grave danger for that too long

we have lived, and bade men live, as merely clever beasts. People once thought that if only a man could live a full animal life, he would be good and all of us would be happy. There are those who think so yet, in Russia and in certain circles nearer home. If man would only stop reasoning! If only he would cease to interfere with his animal impulses! If only he would stop morally inhibiting himself! If only he would let himself go! If only, especially, he would abandon religion, with its everlasting "Thou ought!" and "Thou must not!" Then all would be well, indeed; a naturalistic millennium would dawn. So said Rousseau, that eighteenth-century sentimentalist who is so largely the father of the naturalistic morals and the secularist education that have well-nigh ruined us. "Follow your own purely natural and animal impulses," prescribed Rousseau. "You are not only an animal, but a naturally good animal." So he preached; and how many alleged leaders of thought have echoed and still echo, in varied phrase, the same sort of nonsense! We have heard it more and more during the last two hundred years.

These mistaken moralists have not been evil people: far from it. For the most part their acts have belied their teaching. But that teaching has had very nasty results indeed on us more common men and women. The man-in-the-study may remain an animal and be content with the study. The man-in-the-street, when he starts out to be an animal, is apt to wind up as the man-in-the-gutter. But happily, everywhere to-day we men-in-the-gutter are getting up out of the gutter.

We turn on these preachers of man's essential kinship with the beasts. We have begun to know them self-deceived and wretched guides. They may not pass as wise men any more.

It is sad to realize that most of our philosophers for the past century and more have been such fools. Understand, it is not the scientists who have been dogmatically mistaken and misleading; it is not they who have deceived us. No, it is the philosophers. It is not the scientists who have said, "Man is only an animal." It is the naturalistic moralists who have said it. It is they who have cut our common thinking off not merely from Christian tradition, but also from the thought of all the whole sane, ancient world.

There is no moral quarrel between Religion and Science. The quarrel is between bad philosophers and good philosophers, between those who insist upon the untrue and sentimental assumption that men are only animals and those who hold the sound assurance, attested by Plato and Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, proclaimed alike by the Buddha and the Christ, affirmed also by our own common sense, that man, though here he must dwell in an animal tabernacle, is more than beast in fact and destiny. For Science we can still hold grave respect. It has not played the fool. But in place of a sound philosophy of man, we will no longer accept sentimental rubbish, no matter how expressed in psychological and pseudo-psychological patois.

Whether we be scientists or priests or navvies or cooks or kings, we of this most modern era are be-

ginning to cry out with a new insistence—new for us, but old as the race itself—that we are human, honourable before God and to be respected by ourselves. We can love, not only as beasts love, but as human beings love. We can know, not only as beasts know, but rationally, abstractly as well as concretely; finding meanings and values as well as the facts. We have not only the life of the senses, but also the life of the interpreting and discriminating spirit. We are men. Good! Once more, since that is true, if we but know it true, we can be of some concern to God. God can hardly he interested in human beings who esteem themselves nothing more than shrewd and clever beasts, who seek in themselves to reverse that process of creation by which He made from animals higher creatures, with an intelligence and love at least a little like His own; but a man who desires to be a man, who would fulfil his destiny, that is something worth God's caring about. "Behold, if I be lifted up," the Lord keeps saying, "I shall draw all men unto Me." It is men of whom He is speaking, men who know that they are men.

No man can see the Lord—in Heaven, in Sacrament, or anywhere else—except he first has seen himself and, notwithstanding a proper humility, notwithstanding an acknowledgment of his ignorance, his sin, his failure to achieve, has felt an honest self-respect. Fallen men we are, but worth the Lord's redeeming; fallen men, but men for all that, fit to receive a Father's compassion, a Son's love-sacrifice, a Holy Spirit's gracious nurture. When next I look

into my mirror, let me say—and say it with a sense of awe—"I am a man. I am a child of the Living God." Until I do say that, and mean it, I cannot begin to understand religion. Until I do say that, and mean it, I shall not know what it is to live. It is not enough for man that he should eat and drink and mate. It is not enough for him to accumulate curious learning, or to organize a business and run it, or to exercise himself in the arts, or even to live for family and friends. These things, as said Ecclesiastes long ago, prove at last to be "vanity", by which the ancient Preacher seems to have meant that after a while they get to be rather a bore. The thing that has made man's life endurable this past nineteen centuries, the thing that has warmed into joy both the busy turmoil and the monotonous burden of his days, has been the adventure of the Christian life toward manhood and toward meaning.

Yet it is precisely that holy quest, that boon to wayfaring men, which people in the immediate past have come more and more to ignore.

There is no doubt, of course, about the facts. Christianity has lost for the time being any really directing control over the Occidental world; nor are the inhabitants thereof, for the most part, more than vaguely interested in it. To be sure, there are quite a number of us who still care, many to whom Christ's religion is a matter of life and death. But there is no concealing the fact that we are in a minority, that we are out of tune with what the Press is wont to call "the temper of our time".

The majority of our fellow-citizens is connected only nominally, if at all, with any body of worshippers, and, indeed, rarely thinks of the King or of God's will for man as the King reveals it, from one week's end to another; while vast numbers of those who call themselves Christians mean by that scarcely more than that they are not Jews. If you ask such people what their religion teaches about God, they are not definite about anything except that, whatever it is that makes up that teaching, they have considerable doubt about its truth. If you inquire what Christianity reveals about man, his destiny and his duties, they are equally unsure, except that they are fairly well persuaded that its moral code has been somewhat dented by modern Science, particularly the new psychology. Of course they do not know with any certainty what the new psychology is, either; and their notions of modern Science, largely derived from the penny papers, are the despair of any serious scientist: but they are, nevertheless, fairly confident that Christian morality is a thing out-moded.

They may say that there is, they suppose, some sort of God, and that Jesus the King was probably a very good man; and that is about as far as they go. They pray vaguely, once in a while, if they happen to remember it, especially in an emergency, but usually without confidence that it does any good. Occasionally they go to church.

That sort of thing is not Christianity. It is not a religion at all. It is at best a vague sentiment or a pretty memory; and it has no influence, or next to

none, either in enlarging a knowledge of Truth or in promoting human happiness. The religion known as Christianity is actually a different sort of thing, which matters to-day only to a minor fraction of the people. Yes, but there are those who begin to understand that it is better to be of the few to whom life is worth the living than of the multitude without hope. There are those who again are quite ready to pay the necessary price for meaning and for joy. Most of us in that minority are as well aware as anybody can be, of the irreligion of the great majority. It is with no illusions about our being "in touch with the trend of the moment," that we find ourselves Christians to-day.

Why, the world asks, do Christians bother still to give, till it hurts, of thought and time and money, to build and to maintain churches and to promote mission work at home and abroad? Why do some of us still give our lives to God in the ministry? There is nowadays little or no money in priesthood or in prophecy, nor is there honour to be gained thereby—at least in the eyes of a pagan world. Some in that world regard the clergy as knaves, or at best as parasites upon society. Others expect them to be superflunkies, their lives devoted to saying polite things, gracing dinner tables and giving a pretty touch to weddings and the burial of the dead. Many round about regard them and their profession with good-natured contempt. Yet to-day, in England as well as elsewhere in the world, the former shortage of men offering themselves for Christ's ministry is a thing of the past. More men are in training than can be placed

in work, men of high intellectual calibre and moral stamina. They, with those already ordained, intend to give lives to priesthood whether the populace applauds or not; and faithful laymen still hold up their hands. The world at large asks "Why?"

A little story, not about religion, may make the answer clear to those who do not have the Christian point of view. Some years ago, a certain provincial city had a number of well-off people who said, "Look you. We now have a great deal of money in these parts. It is time we shared more fully in metropolitan culture, shared especially in vision and enjoyment of the best in the Fine Arts." Therefore, the tale runs, they sent to some who were learned in painting and asked them to get together and bring to their town a collection of such modern pictures as were approved by them who loved the best. It was done. The noblest pictures of the century, of those available, were sent to them on loan; and a distinguished critic from the metropolis went to open the exhibit. A dinner was given and a local gentleman made a speech, welcoming the critic. "To-morrow," said he, "when this exhibition opens, we shall see and judge these pictures." The critic rose quickly to his feet and interrupted. "You have made a slight mistake," he said. "To-morrow you will see the pictures; but it is the pictures that will judge you." And it is said that, in that judgment, the people of the city failed to meet the test.

That is precisely the point about our holy religion; for it, too, is an art. Its principles and technique are

the product of a search for meaning and beauty in human terms—a search as old as the race itself. Our religion is, further, the product of what was done to refine and perfect that search by a people who in their age of might (whatever may have happened to them since) were of peculiar religious genius—namely the Jews. Into that great heritage, in the fullness of time, came Lord Jesus, true Deity in the flesh of man, building on it and out of it by His unique genius a Way of Life such as the world had never seen, and has not gazed on since except in Him—so strong He was, so divinely simple, so competent to make life's woe a path to victory. And then, when He had entered into His glory, those who adored Him took that revelation of His and reverently sought themselves to live like Him and in His Power. Often they failed to do it; but always they tried, sometimes at the cost of life itself; and occasionally they succeeded so truly that their achievement gave added lustre to the glory that is His. A technique of living has thus been formulated, a way of spiritual growth that, if followed, can make life meaningful and happy and a thing of beauty. They have been great artists, the Christian saints.

All this spiritual wealth is, in the Christian treasury of faith and devotion and morals, bequeathed to us. We are, God knows, but foolish men, inept to use it. But seeking in our turn to employ the great techniques, we take these lives of ours—lives hindered by animality, dulled by pride, shot with sorrow, hampered by selfishness and sin—and make of them,

with the help of the Master-Artist, something—may He grant it!—of beauty to present to Him. Christianity is this age-developed, God-revealed, saint-enriched way of living—living in such fashion that we may make approach to meaning, nobility and beauty, here on earth before we die.

Since Christianity is that sort of thing, does anyone suppose that Christians will despair if, in a given time or place, men do not happen to care about it? Does the painter cease to paint because the populace may prefer some gaudy sort of chromo? Does the musician cease to clothe his intuitions of Truth in noble sound, because those round about him have no ear except for vulgar noises? Does the poet cease to write because the mob reads only the dullest and most obvious of prose? Shall Christians cease their labour merely because the age is satisfied with trivial living? The world, perhaps, will soon turn in weariness from that pursuit of banality which makes up most of twentieth-century life. Then Christians can teach their noble, satisfying art once more unto a listening multitude. But even should that not be in our time, shall Christians therefore cease to practise the art which God has taught them? It is not Christianity which is judged by the world, but the world by Christianity. Woe to the race of men if in our day it be found wanting! Jesus wept over such a world and so should we, for the greatest of all failures that may come upon a culture, or upon a man or woman, is to be offered Beauty and for fear of travail or difficulty to turn away.

It would help a great deal if, in bringing God's noble art once more vividly to the attention of the world, we found contending with us some positive way of life different from, or even contrary to, the Christian way—some noble scheme for making life count which had rival appeal. If, indeed, Christianity had to-day a worthy antagonist, we could look forward to a mighty struggle and (if we were brave and true enough) a victory. But Christianity to-day contends not so much against a competing way of achievement as against a dull attempt by most of those about us to pass away the time with a minimum of difficulty, against a willingness to live from birth to death an animal sort of existence, with small desire for nobility.

As long as the average modern man of any land—capitalist or communist—can be housed, fed and amused, he sees need for little else. Work is done, in these days, only rarely for the joy of creating, mostly that men may get themselves enough wherewith to buy them leisure; and such leisure as they are able to get, they fill not so much with endeavour toward achievement as with all sorts of purchased entertainment. And when lazy thinking, greed and soft living have driven them near to bankruptcy—monetary and moral—and there are those who seek to rouse them, they find it hard to understand. The economic and social prophets who have wit to know what is really wrong, they cry down; and they listen gladly to the charlatans who obligingly assure them that somehow everyone will manage to muddle through into a happier future without the bother of thinking, with-

out hard work, without giving up greed, without spiritual and moral discipline.

Even in the face of the present world emergency, there is little of common recovery from the cult of comfort at any price—small perception that true life consists of such adventure for Truth, such sacrifice for high and worthy concepts, such love of God and toward man, as may turn men and women from a drift toward futile death. How much there is for us to do to help in the rediscovery by man of his own potential nobility, before the world can be restored to happiness! We dare not fail the Master, because we love with Him the race of men, *the race which does not dare and so must die.*

Look around and see, coming on every year in new force, those who have discovered the ancient and unchanging joy of God. Rebels indeed these are against contemporary dullness. They look no more, for leadership in revolt, to the intellectual liberals of yesterday, or to the gramophonic voice of their liberal successors, for such blind leaders of the blind would have us face the cultural debacle with epigrams. Let it be faced rather with the Gospel of Christ, His challenge and His love.

We need a realization that the secularist civilization built up by our immediate forefathers is worse than wicked. Notwithstanding its material luxury, its pride of intellect, its vast pretension, its advertised superiority over all that ever has been, we need to know and to admit that it is a great bore! We must be possessed by hunger for a life more vital than that

men now have. We need to feel the impulse toward a new crusade, in God's name and power, for real men and women, a new desire to build once more Jerusalem amid our ugly mills, our seething slums, our fustian palaces. There must be proclamation with glad voice from the pulpit, in the shop and on the street-corner, of the good-news of man's true dignity. We need to hear and heed the cry that God can fill the heart and enlighten the mind, that without Him there is loneliness and the dark. Away with the weariness of a time that has come to be, wherein men know everything save why they were born and whither they go! Away with those who, having eyes, see no great harm in ugliness; having ears, hear only of facts and almost never of the Truth; having lives to live, pursue not goodness! Let us cry aloud once more the high romance of man, the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

They who are Christians are the rebels, they and the holy saints; and leading them all, feeding them all, is the Arch-rebel, who reigns, to-day as always, from the Tree to which a safe unperceptiveness once nailed Him. It is Christians who are the new-fashioned folk. They are the Post-modernists. To them and to their King belongs the future. It must be claimed for Him, at whatever necessary cost. It is to adventure, romance, joy that the King is calling from His Altar-Throne. God grant that we may hear Him, lest our culture die.

II

THE SUCCESSFUL MAN

THE PSALMIST, long ago, after he had looked into the depths of an oriental night and contemplated the vast mystery of the heavens, turned his eyes at last upon himself—even as we modern men, for a long time too exclusively preoccupied with the wonders of the physical universe, also must turn, if again we would be sane. He asked at last the question, "What is man?" When he did that, he made the one indispensable inquiry. No matter how much else a man knows, no matter how extensive his scientific studies, no matter how penetrating his philosophical search, unless he has made that query and to some extent has found the answer to it, he remains a fool. What am I meant to become? What is my destiny? What will make me truly great and truly happy? These questions must be faced.

Sometimes it seems as though man's attention, in our present day, is being directed to so many secondary issues that he is more than likely not to face the primary issue at all. Perhaps that is most of what is wrong with the world. It may be that in the last analysis our economic unrest, our incompetence to solve international problems, our personal fretfulness,

our inability to be happy in a world which gives to every man, even the poorest, comforts and luxuries unknown in the past—all come down to this, that most of us have made little or no serious inquiry into the nature of our own being and potentialities. Until that fundamental problem is again faced, there can be no hope of an adequate social reconstruction, or of a satisfactory individual life for anyone.

It is this problem that the Psalmist faced which makes up the philosophical study we call Ethics. Ethics is only a technical name for the science of what constitutes the good life, the complete life, the truly happy life, the satisfactory life, the successful life. It is vitally necessary for us modern people that we shall again become students of this noble science of Ethics; that we shall once more persistently ask ourselves the question: "What constitutes a man? What is he meant to be?"

It may easily be supposed that in all the long centuries, the millennia, which have elapsed since man first began his search for meaning and happiness, there have been returned any number of answers to this fundamental query. It is always interesting to him who first sets out to make an historical study of man's pursuit of the good life, to discover that in the whole of the past there have been to this inquiry only five replies; that there are only five possible definitions of the man that man is meant to be. Every ethical theory can accordingly be classified under one of five heads; on analysis each newly advanced morality turns out to be a variant of one of the same

old five. It is as well that briefly we should recall what those five have been, and are.

The solution of the problem of man's destiny that has always been accepted by the greatest number of people, and seems to-day to be accepted by a very large majority indeed, is the least wise of them all. (That is to be expected. Everyone knows that most of those who make up the human race are not clear-thinking, not far-seeing. A majority is usually wrong.) This most popular but quite impercipient answer is that the successful man, the happy man, the man who fulfils his destiny, the great man, the worth-while man, is he who owns many things. His possessions are the index of his value. So common is this notion that it has become enshrined in a popular form of speech. One picks up the newspaper almost any day and reads that someone has died, in New York or London or Budapest or somewhere, and that when he died he was worth —— and then comes a figure, so many dollars or yen or francs or pounds sterling. The common run of men is prepared to estimate a dead man's worth in the terms of what he had.

The answer is obviously unintelligent. Whenever we give to our own experience any serious thought, we know how foolish is such a standard of ethical estimate. One has only to live a very short time before he discovers at least one man who has, let us say, a hundred thousand pounds but is not worth to himself, to his fellow-men, to God Almighty, the price of a postage-stamp. One has only to live

a little while longer to come across another man who also has a hundred thousand pounds and is worth so much to himself, to humanity, to God, that when one thinks of him one forgets his money altogether. Neither is it long, in any man's life, before he knows and loves someone whose worth is so great as to be impossible of expression and yet who possesses not a penny, nor ever has possessed one, nor ever will.

This testimony, from one's own experience, to the absurdity of estimating worth in terms of things, is confirmed by the voice of history. It may or may not be quite literally true that it is harder for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle; but it is certainly harder for a rich man to get his name into a history book. When we look back over the long panorama of human affairs, we see from time to time emerging from the ruck of men those who have truly mattered, those who have moulded the lives of the human beings that have lived around them, those who have changed the future happenings of mankind, those before whom an observer instinctively removes his hat and bows his head in respect. Almost none of these persons ever had any money.

Look, for example, at that greatest of American presidents, Abraham Lincoln. Most people will admit that he was a great man, as great a political leader as has been produced by the occidental world in modern times, a man of significance, worth a good deal. Yet when he died, all that he possessed was a little wooden house in Springfield, Illinois, covered

to the roof-tree with mortgages. His widow had to get a grant from the American Congress that she might pay the dressmaking bills incurred while she was mistress of the White House. He was a very poor man. He was worth a good deal.

Or consider St. Joan of Arc. She was a peasant's daughter from Domremy. From a childhood of poverty she emerged into public life, to live a few short years—years spent still in poverty but years filled with bright adventure—led on by the voices of her angels. When she came to her death in the market-place of Rouen, it would have been hard to find in all that land one more destitute than she. Yet she made France.

Or consider for a moment that great Florentine of the end of the Middle Ages, Savonarola. An argument can well be made for the contention that he was really the father of modern Christianity. If it had not been for him, it is hard to see how Luther and Calvin could have done their work. Contemporary Protestantism certainly should look back to him with gratitude. It is equally hard to see how there could have been without him the later Ignatius of Loyola, whose Jesuits remade Catholicism at the same time that the Reformation was doing its work in more northern countries. The debt of that counter-Reformation to the Florentine friar seems plain. His influence on our present religion, then, should not be underrated. He was worth a great deal, that strange Dominican, led forth to die in the great square at Florence. He did not own even the

habit that he wore. He was worth a good deal.

From the religious history recorded in the New Testament, the same lesson may easily be learned. The twelve Apostles were all poor men, save Matthew the publican, and even he had to abandon his worldly post before he was permitted to become a Prince of Holy Church. The Lady Mary, mother of the Lord, derives her claim for veneration from no palace wherein she lived, nor from fine clothes in which she dressed herself. She was a country carpenter's wife, who did her own work and was content. Yet Christians since have lifted her to a height to which no other mortal has ever been exalted, above all human beings that ever have lived, below none other than her own God-begotten Son. And as for that Son, Jesus whom we call the King, he had nowhere to lay His head; He was poor utterly. Yet for nineteen centuries men have tried by tongue and pen to express the worth of Him and have not begun, for all their labour, to succeed in doing it.

Still, the contention that the successful man is the man of wealth is an answer to the problem of what constitutes greatness. It is an answer for them that like it. They have their reward, such as it is.

The second solution of the problem consists in saying that the truly happy man, the one who is what he was meant to be, is he who best can amuse himself, he who can have the most fun.

There are those who seem to think that this is not so noble a reply to the fundamental inquiry as the one of which we have first taken note; but to many people,

and those not the least wise, it must seem a reply much better, more adequate. After all, old Omar, sitting underneath his tree with his book and his bottle and his lady, is a much more admirable creature than Poor Richard, carefully saving his money and putting it in the bank and sitting down on Saturday night to admire his deposit receipts. Surely there are few characters less lovely than that of Miserly Dick. The Persian was the better man. Whatever his vices, he was trying to pursue something which had an inherent connection with his own inner being. It is true that Omar somewhat *bewails* the fact that pleasure is all he has. Notwithstanding that, since pleasure is all he believes man can possess, he gives himself to the pursuit of it with an admirable enthusiasm. Is not this, perhaps, the wisest thing a man can do with life?

Those who have studied much the history of mankind know that to live for pleasure is no wise man's course. Man has had to learn again and again, in the school of sad experience, that when pleasure is made an end in itself it ceases to be a food for the human spirit and becomes an opiate.

Perhaps this is usually the reason that people seek to make pleasure the end and aim of existence. They are trying to hide from something, something which they find it difficult to face. After the War, when there were those ready to insist that youth was "flaming", occasionally one heard it said that the young seemed to be, in those days, very happy indeed. "For look," it was argued, "how wholeheartedly they

throw themselves into a life of pleasure." Such comments were always inspired by ignorance about young people. Anyone who really knew them, in those days, knew well enough that their avidity for amusement was not due to happiness, but to unhappiness. The War had shattered all illusions and had bid them ask for a meaning which, somehow, no one seemed competent, in their estimation at least, to impart to them. Life was an enigma, impossible to contemplate. "Therefore," said they, "let us have a drink and a bit of jazz. There *is* no meaning." In that, they were merely restating the comment not only of Omar Khayyam in his wiser moments, but of all the hedonists who ever have lived. Pleasure is not a solution. It is a refuge, and a futile refuge, for those who seek to escape.

In still another respect pleasure is more like an opiate than a food, namely in this, that the more one takes of it the more he must take as the years go on. Cocaine would not be the dreadful thing it is if the user of it got the same satisfaction from the thousandth dose that he did from the first one. One must take more and more of the drug, and that more and more frequently. Finally, no matter how much one takes or how often one takes it, the old refuge is no longer adequate. The user is owned, not only his body, but his soul. That is the end of him, an end not pleasant to be looked upon. Precisely the same thing is true of pleasure. History is full of the tales of individuals, nations, societies, cultures, that have accepted pleasure as an answer to the problem of life

and have tried to live accordingly. Those records are almost invariably the stories of them who began with simple pleasures, moderately pursued, and went on until their pleasures of necessity had to become more and more frequent, more and more exciting, more and more debasing; and then at last, no matter how terrible the type of pleasure had become, it failed to distract the participants from the tragic problems which all the while, from the very beginning, they had been seeking to avoid. That has been the end of them, too, an end not pleasant to be looked upon.

There is often something quite amusing, attractive, even compelling, about a play-boy in his early twenties. There is nothing more pathetic, more grotesque, upon which the eye of man may fall, than that same play-boy still a play-boy at the age of fifty-five.

The third solution offered to the problem of what constitutes a noble, happy human being, is that of him who insists that human greatness is to be measured in terms of power: that he alone is successful who can say to men, "Do this!" and they do it; who can say to other men, "Stop doing that!" and they must stop.

There are those, to be sure, who seek to control other men merely because it amuses them so to do. We all know such people. Every club possesses one or two, every church congregation, every labour union, every political unit. The usual reaction of the rest of the world to such persons is to laugh a little and, since they so desire to be in control, gladly to let them do their will, unless indeed their doings prove in-

tolerably wicked. It is not to such persons—really pleasure lovers—that reference is here being made, but to a much nobler sort of human being. It is, rather, to the man who says in calm, firm thoughtfulness, "I am prepared to go through any form of preliminary discipline, I am ready to starve if necessary as I serve my probation, if only I may come to the place where I can make men do my will. When that day comes, I shall rule them for their higher good. I will make life over on their behalf, and they shall help me do it. The world will be a better place, because I have commanded and they have obeyed." They would coerce the world into goodness, and thereby fulfil their destiny.

It has seemed to many observers that Napoleon Bonaparte was such a man. It is a great mistake to think of him merely as a vulgar, ambitious, little Corsican general. On the contrary, his mature years were devoted to the service of a great idea. He envisaged all Europe as a united whole, in which there were to be no nations divided from one another by artificial frontiers, by absurd tariffs, by conflicting predatory ambitions. He desired to see what every sane European to-day wishes might be. But Napoleon was no "sentimentalist". He understood very well that it was quite impossible to persuade the nations of Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century to bring about, of their own volition, any such happy solution to the political problems of the European continent. If he were alive to-day, looking upon Europe as it is, he would not be likely to interpret the international

scene in the fashion of the late Mr. Wilson, or in that of those who with him dreamed that men are spiritually ready for a voluntary international agreement that will be more than an affair of paper, easily torn. No, Napoleon determined to take the forceful short-cut. He was, he felt, the man of destiny, called by God that by the power of his own inherent greatness he might make of Europe, from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, from the Urals to the Western Sea, one nation. All that was necessary was that he should first knock down, crush, annihilate, the component parts of that which was to be, and subdue them to his will.

We all know what became of Napoleon. The nations over which he sought to exert such a benevolently despotic power joined together, in common hatred of their would-be benefactor, put him on a small island in the middle of the ocean, and told him to think it over until he died. In his career, possibly, we can see revealed what is wrong with the power answer in attempting to define man's destiny. It may seem all very well to seek so to control; but the attempt to coerce inevitably arouses in humanity a rebellion that destroys the attempt, and also him who has designed it.

It is so not only in the affairs of nations, but also among individual men. Let us say that a man has complete control of me, personally. I must do what he commands. I dare not defy his will. He has me in his grip. Let us suppose that he is a good man and wishes well toward me. Let us say that he comes to me and demands that I do what in my own inmost

heart I know I ought to do, and forbids me to do what in my own inmost heart I know is wrong for me, demands and forbids because he can. Do I love him? If I am not a strangely abnormal individual, I wish to stick a knife into him at the first opportunity. Because of this instinctive reaction toward coercive authority, the welfare of mankind, the development of all that is good in civilization, is not brought about by force. Human improvement can come only by a slow spread of mutual understanding, a common tolerance, a seeing of the other man's point of view. Power is not enough.

Yet there are always many, in any generation, who seek to attain to greatness by this method of exerted force. There are always nations which would govern subject peoples for the apparent good of those peoples, but without their consent. There are always those who would inaugurate wars to end war. In the end, such efforts come to nothing, nothing but bitterness of heart, such bitterness as Napoleon knew in his days on St. Helena.

The other two possible descriptions of the road to human greatness and human happiness, because they are much better than the ones we have described, take less labour in the description. It is generally to be observed that the more true a thing is, the easier it is to state.

One finds the fourth answer given frequently today by young men and women in our colleges and universities; not, of course, by the majority even there, for the people who are in institutions of higher

learning are no more necessarily wise or shrewd than their contemporaries who lack academic privileges. This group is quite considerable in number; it has real significance for the future; and it is not without great charm. The man or woman who is numbered in it is apt to say something like this: "I am not such a fool as to waste my life in the accumulation of things. I have brains enough to know that to live in terms of pleasure is to run away from life. I am cercertainly not so unwise as to seek to coerce anybody into an undesired righteousness. I shall give my life, rather, to the dispassionate and scientific pursuit of pure knowledge. I shall look as clearly as I can upon such phenomena as may be observed with my five senses; and I shall use my reason to arrange into an ordered whole the things that I have empirically discovered, together with those that have been discovered by other empirical observers, by those whose accuracy and logical soundness may be trusted. In the doing of this, man's knowledge of the world may, perhaps, be a little the larger and more worth while because I have lived; and in the doing of it, I shall fulfil my destiny." The beauty and appeal of such an attempted way of living everyone, as a matter of course, will admit. It is an answer so much better than the three to which we have just given our attention as to make them seem the answer of a lower species.

Yet there are those who, not because of dogmatic pre-possessions but simply because they know something of humanity, because they have studied history a little, because they have observed their

fellow-men, have grave doubt about this being, for all its charm, an answer that is wholly true. Is man merely a scientifically observing and rational person? Is his life determined only, or even chiefly, by the things that strike him when, as the cool, calm scientist, he looks at facts and thinks them through into an ordered whole? Does what we do depend exclusively, can it be made chiefly to depend, upon rational determinants? There are those who answer in the negative.

Make, for instance, a simple but very important observation of man's actual behaviour. What is it in any man's life that has more to do with the determination of his success or failure, his happiness or unhappiness, more to do with influencing where he shall live and how, what he shall do and why, than anything else that happens to him from birth to death? It is apt to be the woman with whom he falls in love. The same thing is true, to an even greater degree, with the life of a woman. The man with whom she falls in love, really falls in love, makes a tremendous difference in her life. Almost anybody will admit that this is true. Well, is this falling in love a matter of scientific observation and calm reasoning? Does the man or the woman sit down and weigh the matter in the balance and decide, by a sort of laboratory experimentation and by serene and dispassionate ratiocination, who it is with whom he or she is to fall in love, or indeed whether he or she is or is not in love with anyone at all? General observation, careful observation, will lead anybody to the conclusion

that the process of falling in love is not in the least scientific or rational. John finds himself in love with Mary Jane. Why, he does not know. He never intended to be in love with Mary Jane. In his more calm moments, he can see many reasons why he should not be in love with Mary Jane; but he is in love with Mary Jane. It has happened to him. The best he can do with his rational powers is to figure out, after it has happened, how it happened that it happened.

There once was a man, with whom this present writer has acquaintance, who married a girl on scientific principles. At the age of thirty, he decided that if he ever were going to marry, it ought to be soon. He wrote down on a paper, in black ink, all the reasons why he should marry and then, in red ink, all the reasons why he should not. After mature consideration, he decided that the black out-weighed the red. There remained the question of whom he should marry. He prepared a filing card for each girl that he knew who was in the least eligible. At the top of each card, he wrote a name. Under each name he wrote down, in black ink, all that girl's good points as far as he was aware of them and, in red ink, all her bad points. He studied the cards and concluded that a certain lady was obviously the person whom he ought to marry. He married her. He did not tell her the manner in which he had decided he would marry her. For all his scientific method, the man still had a little common sense. The marriage was a disastrous one. Marriages are not made that way, that is if they

are to be characterized by a lasting and satisfactory affection.

Other incidents of the same sort of irrational determinants of life will occur to anyone whose eyes are open to things as they are. Our lives are moved by loves and hates, by prejudices instilled in us in infancy, by pre-natal warps, by all sorts of things which have little or nothing to do with rationality. On top of the whole complex which makes up human existence is, to be sure, the Reason, not to be denied or disregarded; but the function of the Reason is not chiefly to determine the future course of life, but more to interpret and understand the things which, from some cause or other, we have experienced. The Reason comes behind the other faculties more often than before them. We make our plans, as we think ever so wisely, to find them over-turned by forces too powerful to be resisted, but irrational. You think things over in advance. Your life lies before you, stretched out clearly on a reasonable foundation. You are invited out to dinner. You look across the table and see there a new face; and life is neither the same again nor at all what you thought it was going to be. You make your plan for a year, for five years, for a decade, for the future; flags fly in the street, bugles are calling, a strange excitement fills the air, and you find yourself in a muddy trench in Flanders, where you never meant to be.

It is a perilous thing to try to make a human life wholly sufficient in terms of rationality alone. If it could be done, the result would be a human being so

repulsive to the rest of mankind as to be little better than a monster, a horror, not to be thought of without shuddering. But we need not fear such a dreadful outcome. The thing cannot be done.

The only answer other than these four which has ever been given to the question of what constitutes a successful and completely satisfying life is that it consists in a companionship with God in His creative activity.

To say this may seem to be to utter merely a pulpit platitude. If that be so, it is probably because we modern men are wont to have a wholly inadequate conception of what is meant by God's creative activity. Too many people think of it in terms childish and petty. That they do this comes from their having taken too literally those beautiful symbolic myths with which the Bible opens, stories which, taken so, are absurdly naive but which, taken as they were meant to be taken, are full of significance.

I recall my own earliest instruction about God as Creator of heaven and earth. I received it at the knee of my maternal grandmother, a good—even a saintly—Wesleyan Methodist lady in Southern Ohio. She told me that once upon a time God took a week off from the things that he generally did, in order to make the world. She was never quite definite about what it was that God generally did. I do not suppose that she ever had devoted thought to that interesting ontological problem. At any rate, so she told me, He did take a week off, and in that time He made all things that are. He made part of them one day, another part the next, and so on, until, on the sixth day,

out of the primeval stuff He created man. On the sixth evening He looked over the week's work and said, "It is very good." On the seventh day He rested from His labour; and as far as my grandmother's teaching went and that of those whose religious convictions she shared, God has been resting ever since.

That childlike conception of the relation between God and His universe satisfied my inquiring mind as fully as it did hers until such time as I began to grow up and to study Science and Philosophy. Then I discovered that that was not at all the way in which God works. It is not true that He made the Universe, set it going, and sat back to watch it run. God is, rather, creating all things now. In Him they have their being. By the continuous exercise of His will, by the outgoing of His creative mind, He makes them what they are. If at any instant He should forget to care for His creation, should cease to set in motion those energetic forces which not only move all things but are all things, there would be nothing. The creative work is not done. It never will be done. Creation is not something which had a beginning and ending; creation is a process of the Infinite Mind.

What a joy it must be to God that His creative work is always going on and that nothing is completed. It had to be so if God is supremely an Artist. Every human artist who amounts to anything knows that the joy of making something beautiful is vastly greater than the joy of contemplating that which has been made. Once the painting has been painted, to the painter it is a dead thing, a thing past and over.

Once the poem has been written, it no longer lives in the mind of the poet. It is the doing that matters, not the getting of it done. The Infinite is always creating. That is a part of His Infinite Perfection.

Many men and women have discovered that the highest gift of God to man, the thing by which He most greatly blesses those whom he would make happy, is the opportunity to share with God in that His creative labour. It is the artist who is really happy. Among human beings, the person who, at whatever necessary cost of lesser satisfactions, seeks to embody in his own creations something of that beauty which is not only in his lesser heart and mind, but also in the heart and mind of God; who attempts to make, by the outgoing of his stumbling thought, that which reflects the truth which the mind of God alone perfectly perceives and knows; who strives from day to day to live in terms of that nobility which makes up what we call God's goodness,—he alone is great. He who works with things and thoughts and human lives, in terms of beauty, truth and goodness, is companion to the Master Artist, the Perfect Thinker and the Truly Good. To share in such divine creativeness is to know the peace of God within oneself, to feel within one's own being the joy of Him who makes and moves all things that are.

It is true that man cannot help much in the creation of things that are less than human. He cannot manufacture mountains or spread around the earth an envelope of sea. He cannot set suns in the heavens or make those electronic combinations which constitute

all matter. The galaxies are a little beyond his reach, or perhaps somewhat beneath him, and so are the atoms. It is with men and women that one can work most freely and most happily with God, in the making of them truly joyful.

In Jesus the King we can see God at work, making the sort of men he longs to make, the kind of men that he permits us to assist him in making; and it appears that most of all he wishes to create in them all a mighty joy. He does not seem satisfied if those for whom and on whom He labours turn out to be merely "good". There is an almost ecstatic gaiety about Him; and He works and prays that He may enkindle in all men a gaiety like His own. He offers to us in our turn, as to the happy Christians of the days gone by, a chance to set alight that gaiety in others, and so find more of it creatively within ourselves. How odd it is that anyone who has ever read the Bible should regard the work of God for men or our work in Him for men, that work which is at once religion and life, as a pale or passive thing. From cover to cover God's Book is the record of a vigorous, almost an hilarious Deity. Men and women recorded in it, true enough, may weep, but that is either because they do not know God or because they have forsaken Him. It is not pain or loneliness or bereavement or death that ruins them. It is being apart from the glowing and mighty God that sends them down in sorrow to the grave.

The God-man at last, in the fullness of time, stoops to share the pain and bitterness of them who have

denied His way; but God is dynamic even in that agony, and thereby breaks the yoke of sin. At the last He cries out "It is finished!" in a word of victory. There is nothing timid or passively accepting in Him or in our holy religion. As His Father sent Him, so sends He them who are His, to redeem the world, to make it possible that men may have joy—creative joy —and live.

Jesus the Christ has revealed that the force the operation of which results in this joy is *love*—not being loved but loving. In Him we see God giving love with no demand of love, no hope of thanks, no expectation of reward. He loves equally when men honour Him and when they hate and betray and deny and crucify Him. He loves because that is God's way of making out of lesser clay real men and women who, won at last by challenge of His love to something of an effort toward nobility, feel for the first time the joy that is of Heaven. So it is that God loves the world! And therein also is at once *our task* and earnest of *what we may become*.

"Lord, what is man?" asked David, and all the prophets and sages have echoed the same inquiry. A thousand years after David, God answered it Himself —hanging on a Cross, with arms stretched wide to a world that might by love, and in no other way, be redeemed to a new and adequate creative joyousness. "Behold the man!" said Pilate. "Behold the man!" cries all the hosts of saints. "Behold the man!" echo they who understand.

There are, then, these five definitions of man's

destiny: man is a wealth-grubber; man is a pleasure-seeker; man is a power-wielder; man is a pure thinker; man is a creative lover. Only the last answer is completely true or adequate.

But men to-day would have it otherwise. They would deny and repeal the law of man's being. Therefore is life become a disappointment. Therefore we destroy ourselves. Wealth-desire brings us near to economic collapse; men go astray in search of pleasures that degenerate into irksome and possessing licence; the stupid powers that would coerce lay plans for "necessary war"; pure thinking grows abstract, divorced from love. We are impelled to a pursuit of ends that are less than human. We who insist that we must have our freedom, we are slaves indeed. Meanwhile Lord Jesus, God and King and Lover, weeps over this, a tawdry new Jerusalem: "Hadst thou but known in this thy day the things that belong to Thy peace! Now are they hid from thine eyes. The days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee and lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee."

He who would be less than man shall end as nothing. That nation, that culture, that era, which denies to man his destiny, it shall be as Nineveh and Tyre. They who have learned with God to love—if need be to suffer and die for love,—they alone can restore to sanity our mad Jerusalem—at a great price, but a price well worth the paying. Let the men of the Creative Cross rise up, and that soon, lest the Day of the Lord draw nigh.

III

THE CHANGING SCENE

ALL OF us, even the least alert, have come more or less suddenly to at least a partial realization that the social order is manifestly and urgently in need, not merely of improvement in incidental details, but rather of a fundamental overhauling. Not merely must business, finance and industry, government and legislation, be reformed in the light of that which is coming into being; but also, and more importantly, common thinking about right and wrong must be rigorously overhauled. Our task is precariously complicated. On the one hand, it must be seen to that the goods of the earth are produced and distributed more justly, for the common good; on the other, care must be taken to insure that, in the course of necessary transformations, individual men and women are freed by the developing social processes, rather than enslaved by new pressures incident to change. It is not necessary, fortunately, that we ordinary Christians who would be good citizens shall become sufficiently expert to understand in detail all phases of the economic problem; but we must at least be able unerringly to lay our finger on what at the moment is the central social trend. Unless we see what that may be, we can hardly contribute an intelli-

gent co-operation in the saving of our common life from a ruin that is only too possible.

Almost all the economic and political endeavours which puzzle people to-day, are variant approaches to one single problem—the problem of how to get into the hands of the people who labour enough pay to enable them to buy the things which they have made. Ours is not a difficulty in stimulating production. The many inventions of the last half-century have disproved the statement of the older political economists that, because of the niggardly reluctance of nature, there must always be great masses of people who suffer for lack of sustenance. From a period of deficit we have passed to a period of surplus. Instead of having too little to go around, there is more than we need. It ought to be plain to anybody that the problem is no longer one of lack of wealth but rather one of blocked distribution thereof. There is no use in making things if there is nobody who can buy them; and people cannot buy them unless they are paid, for their labour, an amount approximately equal to the value of what they produce.

They have not been so paid for a considerable time past, not by a very great deal, which explains why, all round the world, factories lie idle and people generally are in poverty. Before industry can remunerate its workers, it is, as things are now arranged, required to pay a great many other charges. A large part of what is produced goes to those who, by hard work, by luck, by inheritance, have gained control of machinery or privilege in land, with a consequent

vested right to draw income in the shape of rents and interests and profits, income which is neither the result of miracle nor the reward for labour, but rather a payment for the use of their money. These people, commonly called capitalists, are, it should always be remembered, guiltless persons. They have been legally permitted and indeed socially encouraged to invest as much as they could possibly save, in return for a promised dependable income. Nor are they rich people only. Any man who has money out on interest is a capitalist, even though he have only a few pounds in a savings bank. The difference between Mr. J. P. Morgan and the Messrs. Rothschild, on the one hand, and Mr. and Mrs. John Doe who invest five shillings a week, on the other, is not one of kind but only one of degree. The question before the world is not whether we can afford to pay Mr. Morgan and the Rothschilds any longer for the use of their money to the extent that we have been paying them, but whether we can afford to pay *any* capitalist, little or big, for the use of his money to the extent that we have been paying him.

The difference between what it costs to make and distribute commodities and the price consumers pay for them now mostly goes to investors: stockholders, bondholders and other money-lenders. Industry must make enough not merely to supply the workers by brain or brawn, but also, before it pays the workers at all, to furnish large sums to this *rentier* group. It is because this group exists and is paid too well for the use of its money that the workers who produce the

goods—be they head-workers or brawn-workers—cannot afford to buy what they have made.

That is the first, and unavoidable, fact about modern economic difficulties. The problem behind nine-tenths of our industrial unrest, a problem which we must solve or see society go chaotic, is the problem of how gradually to reduce the rewards paid to investors in the shape of interest, so that cost price and sales price may be drawn together. An understanding of this is necessary for the comprehension of any of the significant social movements of our time. Every labour struggle, strike, lockout, every profit-sharing plan, every income or inheritance tax, every bit of social insurance, every minimum-wage procedure, every Communist movement or Fascist development, is a manifestation of the conflict between those who seek to protect or to advance the profits of the investor and those who seek to reduce those profits.

Nor is it possible to understand the governmental policies and procedures which are rapidly being enacted into law,—especially and dramatically in the United States but also, let it be remembered, in Europe as well—unless we comprehend that the fundamental purpose of most of them is to make it less profitable to invest money, to take away from the investing classes a considerable portion of their income, and an ever larger portion thereof, and to put the money into the hands of those who buy rather than into the hands of those who save. These measures do not necessarily involve the confiscation of anybody's property; the whole programme may

be perfectly realized and still private property be conserved. The desire is properly not to take away any man's wealth but merely to see to it that he less and less can rent it out. These new laws tend, all of them, to cut down the interest paid on money and thus to bring ever closer together the cost of making goods and the selling price of goods, to distribute to those who work a much larger share of the products of industry and to those who invest a smaller and smaller share thereof. It should be remembered also that this readjustment, which is being made everywhere in our modern world, is not a matter of theory but a matter of fact. It is not Communism or Socialism or Syndicalism that is being described. It is a thing in actual being, this growing perceived necessity to decrease profits and increase wages and buying power, that we may avoid an economic debacle. Calling it names breaks none of its bones. Our approval or disapproval of it, our liking it or detesting it, are matters of small practical importance. It is.

It seems certain that within a few years we shall find that in every land industry is rigidly controlled; that businesses are told how much of goods they can produce and sell (lest the market in any commodity be flooded); that the hours and wages in all trades will be regulated by law; that maximum and minimum wages will be fixed by statute; that the number of hours a man may work will be limited by the government; that the profits an owner or owners may take will be regulated either by means of taxing devices or by actual legalized restriction. Nobody, in the near

future, will be allowed to exercise economic liberty if that liberty be deemed to interfere with the welfare of the group.

It will easily be seen that this new state of things requires certain developments in ethical thinking and ethical teaching—and this whether the teaching be given by parents to children in the family circle, from the pulpit, by masters and mistresses in the schoolroom, or in ways more casual though no less effective. Economic wisdom, as everyone knows, is not imparted merely in technical courses in political economy. It is spread abroad incidentally, in connection with almost every subject discussed, in every casual conversation. Of what is the new economic morality to consist, and how does it differ from the old? That is at once our most important and our most interesting problem at the moment.

We have for a long time successfully managed to make ourselves believe in the rightness and desirability of a kind of individualistic scramble. We have somehow effectively persuaded one another that, if every man will work as hard as he can for the accumulation of money which he may invest, he himself will be a happy person and society will greatly benefit thereby. We have come to assume, as a matter of course, that the chief social duty and individual privilege is to be "on the make", to "get ahead"—and by that we have meant that everyone should strive to become a member of the possessing and lending class, rather than remain in the working class. We have also quite sincerely taken it for granted

that men and women may always find for themselves, and each by himself or herself, prosperity, if only they will take advantage of their opportunities with sufficient daring, inventiveness and assiduity.

This unrestricted individualism, which preachers and teachers and the populace generally have admired as though it were a cardinal virtue, *was once* a virtue. In the days when the world lay all undeveloped, when there was plenty of free land and many new markets overseas—in the days when the unappropriated resources of the planet seemed endless—it was precisely this attitude of mind that was needed. But the days of the economic frontier are over. There are no longer sufficient unexploited territories for the maintenance of an over-production for foreign sale; while natural resources are almost wholly preempted by private owners, from whom they may be procured, even by the most daring of individuals, only at a price almost impossible to pay. It is no longer necessary or wise or kind to call those things virtues which were rightly esteemed virtues in a different day, but which have ceased to be virtues.

The virtues that are now required are quite different. These are a willingness to co-operate, an ability to see welfare in terms of the group rather than in terms of the individual, a glad understanding that only by labour performed can anyone morally share in general prosperity. We must learn that wealth frozen in the hands of a *rentier* class ceases to have value; that unless money is fluid, it actually ceases to represent wealth at all. Our children must

be led to regard money as of no significance unless it is reasonably, and constantly, being circulated; to know that the possession of riches for the sake of gain has become not merely anti-social, and therefore intolerable, but quite literally an absurdity. It is going to be hard to act naturally and unerringly on that new basis—to unlearn what have been deemed truisms these many years; but somehow we must learn to do it, *and quickly*. The world moves on too fast to tolerate delay.

The problem becomes concrete when we think of such an alleged virtue as thrift. There was a time when what was needed by society more than anything else was money saved up, which could be used for the enlargement of productivity and the development to that end of more and more industry. Thrift was once an indispensable social duty. It was good for the world that a man should save and put his money away in the bank, and that the bank should use that money to develop further means of production. But nowadays we have facilities for production in excess of the goods that we are able to buy and use. We do not require more capital to the extent that once we did. In so far as that need has decreased, the virtue of thrift has ceased to be a virtue. We do not really need, nowadays, to have people save their money. It remains a good thing, of course, that people should look out for emergencies —sickness, old age, death; but it is much better and cheaper and more scientific to handle even such emergencies by group methods rather than by in-

dividual saving "for a rainy day". Except to the extent of getting together a modest sum needed to finance sudden necessity for adjustment, individual saving is to-day anti-social. We have devoted a great deal of attention to teaching the virtue of thrift. It is now going to take hard and deliberate effort to teach ourselves and other people *not* to save, but rather wisely to spend. "New occasions teach new duties. Time makes ancient good uncouth." This one example is perhaps sufficient to make plain how different must be our economic morality from that which we were taught yesterday, and the day before.

If we are able to make, constructively and with understanding, the transition from the economic ethics which have been in vogue for the past three or four hundred years to the new ethics (a morality startlingly like that Catholic ethics which governed men and women in medieval times), we must make an almost violent effort to escape from outworn thought-patterns; to comprehend the nature of the social changes going on; and then present them to our friends and associates clearly, persuasively *and without delay*.

It is well to note that, in a time of transition like ours, it is difficult and frequently dangerous to seek to promote a contemporary social wisdom. The danger comes from the fact that the older generation, the generation now in control of schools and churches, of clubs and trades-unions, and of social intercourse generally, has a mind fixed in thought-moulds no longer representative of social facts. It does not for

the most part understand at all those changes which have taken place in our social needs, nor the changes which must therefore also take place in our social theory and practice. It is apt still to insist that anyone who does not believe in and advocate old-fashioned, free, unrestricted individualism, must be some sort of traitor. Even our present governments often feel it necessary to consider this common prejudice and partly to conceal the true nature of their programmes by lip-service to an individualism which they know is outworn, and which by their every enactment they tend, and intend, to thwart. They must move slowly lest they rouse violent and uninformed opposition. The teacher, too, who lets his pupils understand that it will no longer be permitted to anyone to enjoy interest on money, except under social control and strictly on sufferance, or that it is not sound sense for them to save for investments, is sure to have a good many parents, and quite possibly the school authorities, denouncing and possibly dismissing him, on the ground that he is some sort of a Red. The preacher may easily encounter a similar fate at the hands of lay-folk who support his religious enterprises. There are pressures exerted upon almost any man who speaks out concerning the way the world is going and must go. Such a one may plead all he will that he is merely stating the facts as they are. He may even point out that his national government is moving inevitably and rapidly in those directions. His teaching will be none the more welcome for that. He must, under such circumstances, be wise and

brave. It is difficult to be both. On the one hand, he is in danger of scorning the perfectly honest people who do not know what is happening. On the other hand, he may fear that this is no time to speak out, and conclude that to save his own skin he had better let those around him drift ignorantly on into a new world wherein they are certain to be destroyed. He must avoid both these dangers if he is to be effective.

But there is an even more important phase of this matter.

Difficult though it is for an enlightened man courageously to face the future, to face, and to help those around him to face, the economic realities of the moment and to give an understanding reaction to those realities, it is also required that he remember, and enable others not to forget, *the permanent worth and value, in our present day and for the future, of the individual as an individual.* We have only to look at contemporary Russia to observe how easy and how terrible are the results of assuming that, since the individual must sink his economic welfare in the economic welfare of the group, it follows that he must of his own will lose, or by social compulsion be compelled to abandon, his individuality, and permit himself to be absorbed into a kind of impersonal abstraction known as "Mass-man", to whom (or which) he must be utterly immolated every day from birth to death. That is a *non sequitur* of the first order.

It is not true that man is only an economic man or,

indeed, most importantly an economic man. The really important things about his life are not economic at all. Economics has to do with the problems incident to our earning a living; but earning a living is only a preparation for living, at the most a prerequisite for living. Our destiny is not confined to getting bed and board nor even to sleeping in the bed and being nourished by the board, once we have obtained them. Man's life does not consist in an abundance of things; more chiefly it consists in a complex of loves, hates, loyalties, aversions, thoughts, dreams, intuitions, hopes, despairs, surrenders, and defiances. Man's life consists in his reactions toward other people and toward the Supreme Personality who creates and permeates all things that are, and gives them meaning. It is in the realm of these things—in the realm of his thoughts, of his approaches to beauty, of his affectional contacts with persons, and of religion, that he finds significance. *We must be careful lest we teach or tolerate the rightness of such a socialized attitude as will destroy in super-economic fields of activity, that individualized living which alone can give satisfaction to the human spirit.*

This may be put in another way, and indeed often has been, by saying that the greatest problem of the future is that of how we citizens are going to use our leisure. It is certain that there will be more and more leisure for more and more people. Machines even now take care of much of the former work of men; and in the future they will do more and more of our drudgery. It involves no extravagant flight of the

imagination to believe that, in all probability within the next fifty years, it will not be necessary for any man or woman, in order to enjoy a proper creature comfort, to work gainfully more than ten hours a week. We must, therefore, be turning our attention very definitely to the training of ourselves and, even more, of our children in an understanding of those aspects of life which are not economic at all and which can be dealt with, and must be dealt with, individually and in leisure time. There is great danger, else, that we shall so standardize and devitalize the use of leisure as to take from men and women all real fun.

In urgent defence of the sanctity of the individual, in an effort to prepare him to make leisure count for happiness, we who are concerned about man's welfare must always remember and continue to point out those things which man has discovered to be the essential elements in living the good life, the full life, the truly human life. We need to relearn, from the lessons of the past, the nature of man—not merely his economic problem, not merely his political problem, not merely his social problem, but his completely personal problem. We must relearn what is involved in becoming independent and self-directing; be once more alert to what it means, and costs, to live that way; discover how so to use our growing leisure and increasing wealth as to become creative and happy, instead of passive and intolerably bored.

In this connection we much need a more proper evaluation of the past than has of late been common.

We need clearly to recognize that, of all the foolish beliefs that infect our absurd modern world, the one which does more harm than most and, perhaps, as much harm as any is the common supposition—quite unsupported by the evidence—that man has himself progressed in such ways and to such a degree as to have changed his essential nature; that the men and women of to-day are a different sort of creature to the men and women of a hundred years ago, or five thousand years ago; that the wisdom of the ages is no longer wise. Until this idea of essential human progress, of change in the nature of man himself, is eliminated from our minds, we are little likely to find much serenity and joy, no matter what may be our economic system. Only he who has looked upon man as man has been, can understand man as man is. It is by a knowledge of the Great Tradition that man arrives at sanity and freedom.

As a matter of fact, there has been throughout the ages no change whatever in any of man's *essential* problems or attitudes. Every man is born, grows up, falls in love and marries, exactly as did his forebears; he has children at his desire and tends them at his cost; he labours, on their behalf and in his personal search for satisfactions. His marriage problems are as old as man and as invariant. Even those complications introduced into sexual mating by economic difficulties are exceedingly old complications. Marriage has been difficult and subject to such delays as encourage abnormalities in every servile state, not merely in ours. The problems connected with

education were venerable when Socrates spoke or Ecclesiastes wrote—and spoke and wrote as aptly as Dewey or Russell or Kilpatrick, and a great deal more clearly; and the various answers to the question of what constitutes the good life change not from generation to generation.

Man strives for human affection, as always he has done and, as always, finds that it eludes him. He works hard, only at length to perceive that travail gets him nowhere. He covets fame, the while he knows that soon he will be as unremembered on earth as though he never had lived. All his jokes, and especially the good ones, were jokes when Adam delved and Eve span. His tragedies at the moment are those which moved to purging pity the dramatists of Hellas; and there is no book about life more modern than the Book of Job. To-day, as of yore, in statecraft, Caesar crosses the Rubicon and still, preparing for the Ides of March, the envious Casca and the stupid Brutus plot their dagger-thrusts. We modern Athenians crowd the Agora for the discussion of some new thing—ears open, mouths agape while wonder-workers speak of strange mutations in the elements and straight lines curved and space perhaps elliptical; —and creep back to our homes at dusk, to realize that, after all, this confusing babble has added neither laughter nor loveliness, changed not the things that really matter. In human living, all that is transformed from generation to generation is the surface appearance of man's creations—his houses, his clothing, his table-manners, his machinery—and the verbal im-

agery in which he states the old bewilderment. The philosophic search remains the same.

But of late, men and women, with strange conceit, have insisted that we are not the heirs of the ages, the brethren of our ancestors, sharers in an eternal problem. We have supposed we could escape the human lot. We have thought we had changed the rules of the game, and were free. This, too, is an ancient story. Icarus, with new-made wings, will fly to the skies; but, though Icarus has forgotten it, the sun still shines with undiminished heat. Wings melted, the modern Icarus falls, not indeed into the sea, but back to earth whence, gravely bruised, he picks himself, content to walk once more. Nor is he enslaved thereby, but rather for the first time liberated. The free man is not he who defies the rules—and dies; but he who, recognizing the compulsions inherent in his being, seeks rather to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest each day's experience. Only he who has arrived at meaning has escaped from slavery.

If life is to be full and happy, the Christian knows well, there must be for every economically emancipated man or woman a disciplined search for meaning—for meaning not merely in terms of pure thought (in which only the rare mind may participate), but for meaning also in terms of love (in which even stupid folk can share); in terms of that mystical thing which a man knows when to his lonely self there comes the touch of understanding and compassionate affection. No man can merely think his way to

meaning. Even the wisest philosopher must come at last, with Socrates, to the place where he says, "I do not know. I cannot understand. The truth eludes me." Yet that same man learns vitally of truth by each out-going of compassion. And so, as well, the simple churl may learn. It is good that men should think; but it is indispensable that men should love. What is asked of a man, if he would take his place with those who have mattered in the long history of the race, if he would make his new-found leisure something more than water poured upon the ground, is that he should dedicate himself to great-hearted, purposed living; that, in the truest sense of the words, he should become a great lover. *That means religion.*

Such is man's task as the race has discovered it, a task to which economic subsistence is only the prelude. If we are to save the toil-emancipated members of the next generation from dull, standardized and stupid existence, fretful and unstable and unsafe, if we are to prevent their being ruined by that very social process which has made them free, we must remember so to call upon the past that we, and those we touch, may in our time anew discover man's possibilities. We must learn from our fathers and our father's God how dignified, how beautiful, how happy, a human being may become. And we must know that in these his potentialities man has not changed.

Only men and women trained in an atmosphere of conscious and adequate self-understanding are com-

petent for citizenship in a new economic and political structure. Without such dynamic citizenship, all our best hopes about the social fabric will come to worse than nothing. We are creating an era full of intricate machinery, social as well as physical, almost unaware that the more elaborate such machinery is, the more competently creative must be those who would use it. It is men and women of creative individuality who must be had, in this as in every other age, to insure the safety or fruitfulness of civilization. Organizations, systems, codes, commissions, mechanisms,—they are secondary things. Strong, courageous, compassionate and independent-minded men and women,—these are always essential for cultural stability, and especially at this moment. If our civilization is to break the precedent set by all its predecessors, and survive, it is such people alone who can preserve it. If that civilization is soon to perish, as seems to cool observers quite within the range of possibility, despite our best endeavour, it will be for lack of such citizens that it dies; and if it should go under, it will be only by free and creative individuals that a new civilization can be built to take its place.

Our greatest task to-day is, then, ourselves to understand anew, and to help our brethren to understand, what man is meant to be and may with God's aid become. It is precisely because our age is in a state of flux, from which it can only with the greatest difficulty emerge without disaster to the human spirit, that sound Christian thinking and teaching are at the moment of such importance, such peculiar

importance. Yet in respect of nothing is the contemporary mind more confused and uncertain than about that very Doctrine of Man, taught by Jesus the Christ and preserved throughout the centuries by His Church.

IV

THE CRUMBLING CODE

LET US be sure that we at least perceive that it is indeed because of lack of understanding of ourselves—man's nature, his destiny, the secret of human success—that we are unable wisely or safely to carry on through the social and economic transition time in which we have to live. It is folly to depend for safety merely upon a moral inertia continuing from the past. We can have no future moral stability except on the basis of renewed dynamic convictions. There was a time when men of at least reputed intelligence believed that one could do away with fundamental personal religion and still keep society on an even keel—abolish Christianity as a Cult and Creed and still retain it as a Code; but that is no longer a tenable position for one who would be esteemed, or think himself, a man of sense. Codes are always built on creeds. Now that the Christian creed about man and about the God of men ceases to be widely and honestly professed, the code once based on that belief is crumbling before our eyes. We have been wont, these late years, to expect a Christian morality without a Christian piety. We now begin to see how absurd is such an expectation. It will help clear up at least our own minds if we think for awhile about the moral problem as it actually confronts us.

Christian people are justifiably alarmed by certain plain tendencies in the world about us to overthrow long established ways of behaving, the codes which grew up when people were Christians. We observe all around us a growing indifference to truth, an increasing disregard for human life, a disparagement of freedom as though it were so much useless baggage, a more common promiscuity and lack of restraint in sex, a tendency to regard marriage as a matter of convenience, to be entered on and terminated whenever sexual attraction wanes, a wider use of contraceptives. These and other similar tendencies are the more pronounced in various countries precisely to the degree that Christianity is no longer welcomed as the true religion for man.

In Russia, for instance, there is a fairly complete overthrow of most of the old codes governing behaviour, an ethical upset that parallels an entire repudiation of religion. In America, the religious bodies, except the Roman Catholic Church and that relatively small body in communion with Canterbury which is called the Episcopal Church, have tended, far more than in any land in Europe or Asia or Africa, to adopt a theology which minimizes the deity of our Lord, His redemptive power and His grace; and in that same America the revolt against conventional codes of conduct has correspondingly become widespread and portentous. One has only to contemplate American divorce mills, at Reno and elsewhere; one has only to look at the way in which finance and business have there of late been fields for

the prostituting of honour and honesty for gain; one has only to observe the growth of racketeering and lawlessness; one has only to listen to American broadcasts and look at American films and hearken to American songs; one has only to read popular American newspapers; to realize how in disrepute in the United States are ways of behaviour which our grandfathers assumed had become as fixed and unalterable, for a civilized modern community, as were the laws of the Medes and Persians. And even in Great Britain which, happily perhaps, is a good bit behind the times in these respects, insulated as it has largely been from the currents of thought which have been more and more secularizing life in other lands and other continents, men and women are at last beginning to realize that British ethical standards, too, are changing, and that in proportion to a growing British irreligion.

It is a mistake to assume that all this giving up of the wise old ways of living is the result of a deliberate campaign, led by a relatively few wicked men, to seduce the people. It should never be forgotten that the prophet of an easy-going, sensual, even licentious behaviour is of no importance except he have an audience ripe to receive his message. Bertrand Russell, for instance, and the other leading philosophical and literary opponents of the old morality, able and honest though they undoubtedly are, would have little influence if there were not thousands of potential hearers and readers predisposed to welcome their onslaughts on the former decencies. The few

are merely saying what the many long to hear. Instead, therefore, of denouncing leaders in that campaign for licentiousness which undoubtedly does exist (and which says that it seeks by its revolts to advance human liberty and social progress), it is more profitable to try to see how the man of the moment actually looks on morals and what, if anything, Christianity is going to do about it.

There are three factors to be considered: morals, the usual man in the street and the Christian Church. The most obvious beginning for a consideration of a three-decker subject is to define each of the terms involved. What is meant by morals? What is the modern man really like? What is God's Church? Usually if one knows what it is about which one is talking, that which one has to say concerning it becomes fairly obvious. Possibly much of the confusion in Christian circles about this matter of how people are behaving, and why, is due to a lack of definition of the terms involved, with the result that something actually quite simple seems to us a confused puzzle.

First, then, morals. "Moral" means nothing more nor less than that which is considered socially useful in the group to which an individual happens to belong; in other words, what is respectable. If one is inclined to think this definition of the ethical somewhat shocking, he is respectfully referred to any good dictionary. Being moral means doing what one's social group considers necessary for group welfare. It means conforming to custom. It will be seen that

what is moral really depends upon the social group to which one gives allegiance and whose standards one respects. To an unreconstructed Igorote in the Philippine Islands it is a moral act to cut off the head of some one who does not live in his village, and stick it up to dry outside his hut. It would be immoral for a citizen of London to do that sort of thing to a citizen of New York, no matter how great the provocation may be. It is moral for a Turk to have three wives at once; moral for a citizen of Nevada to have three wives *seriatim;* immoral for a Christian to have more than one wife living at one time; immoral for a monk to have any wives at all. It all depends upon the group to which one belongs.

Second, what is the man in the street like at the moment? He is, for the most part, one who is more or less informed about almost everything except the Christian religion, concerning which he has vague and often absurdly infantile ideas. He is of the opinion, almost certainly, that what material goods and physical pleasures he can get in this world matter a very great deal and that, if there be any other world, nobody—parson, bishop or pope—knows anything about it. He has long been told that he is only a higher animal. He commonly believes himself to be a direct descendant of the monkey. There would be no harm in his believing that—(as far as his physical body goes, he is in fact akin to the apes)—but he has largely assumed that there is *nothing* in him which cannot be explained in animal terms. He thinks of himself as the creature of natural processes, and of no other.

Such terms as "the spiritual life", "the quest for God" and "the hunger of the soul" are to him only pious phrases without real meaning. He seeks happiness; and he is sure that it may be obtained in terms of food, drink, sleep, applause, good-fellowship, amative ness, being amused, and a chance to let himself go (to which, if literary, he gives the name of "self-expression"). He believes that the most sure way to unhappiness is by self-discipline. He most pathetically, and naturally, "wants a good time". He also wishes to keep out of trouble. That used to deter him from pursuing his desires more than it does now. (In matters of sex, for instance, now that there are plenty of ways easily to avoid consequences, he need not be so cautious as he used to be.) He likes above all things speed and the vivid flash of sensational satisfaction. And why not? Such things are fun. He is here to-day and gone to-morrow. "Eat, drink and be merry" is the word. "To-morrow you are dead." And then? "Oh, then, if there be any then, if there turn out to be a life beyond the grave, that will be quite all right. One believes in evolution, you see. That which is to come will in the nature of things be better than what we have here. "At least," he says, "there ain't no hell, anyway! Cheerio!"

I do not think this is a caricature of the life philosophy of the typical modern man. Tom in the pub and Jennie with whom he walks out, put it in one way; the Honourable Thomas and the Lady Patricia phrase it differently in Mayfair; Mr. H. G. Wells talks pseudo-scientifically about it for the seven shillings

and sixpence book trade; and Lord Russell wraps it up in high-sounding language for university consumption; but it is the same thing, however variously expressed. It is an attitude essentially contemptuous not only of religion but of any sense of moral responsibility. It is of this world only. That it is an unintelligent attitude, out of harmony with racial experience, contemptuous of what mankind has patiently and expensively learned through all the centuries, is true but immaterial. Let no Christian fool himself about the matter. This is indeed what passes for wisdom nowadays.

To be sure, it is not as yet the attitude of the great masses of the people. Most of the common folk, in city and even more in countryside, plod along in much the old ways, held by the inertia of long custom. But that should not too much encourage us, for a pair of reasons. First, the folk at large have forgotten the *why* of their folk-tradition. It is *merely* tradition with most of them. And that means that, once they become aware that there are clever people who scorn those folk-ways as foolish and laugh at them as out-of-date, they are unable to defend their moral code, and themselves become speedily dubious about its validity. Secondly, and along with this, every day brings to an end the seclusion of those who are keeping to the old ways. The tiniest hamlet is tied to the towns by hard roads, along which move with regular frequency the buses and the motor-cars. Every village store sells the cheap and often shoddy merchandise from the metropolis. Every child is

taught to read, and into his mind there pours a constant stream of new and often very queer ideas, by way of penny papers, popular magazines and cheap books, almost all of which sound the praises of the up-to-date. The cinema, too, brings its message of sweetness and light, from Hollywood and similar centres of modern culture. The broadcasters, through the unimpeding ether, blare all day with similar note into the farm-house kitchen and the working man's flat. It is true that in England, at least, the wireless is fairly well tamed as yet. But if one compares even its programmes with those of five years back, he will perceive certain disquieting changes; while every day the enlightened liberals and the cheap press keep clamouring for less classical concerts and more jazz, less thought and more turns from the music hall. The wireless of to-morrow is sure to become what the press of to-day now is. That has already happened in America. It will happen in England, too.

By these and other contacts, the masses are being won from the folk-ways with extraordinary rapidity. There have always, in every age, been a few anarchists who defied the ancient codes; but hitherto the great conservative masses of the common people have restrained them. The eccentrics might be foolish; but hitherto they have always seemed a little ridiculous. Never before has the mob itself gone modern. That helps to make our present situation different, difficult and dangerous. Rapidly, as we watch, the philosophy of "Cheerio and damn the consequences" takes possession of the earth. Moral

restraint and reflective thinking make way for a mere sensationalism. That is what the man in the street is like.

Third, God's Church. What is it, anyway? There are as many definitions as there are communions of Christendom. And even within some of them, as in the Church of England, the Church is variously defined. Naturally the man in the street has a most confused notion about it all. Does the Church mean a collection of long-faced persons, anemically admiring one another? Or is it such a thing as may function through the Y.M.C.A.? Or is the Church those respectable dull-buddies who are interested in listening to parson give weekly talks on the good, the true, and the beautiful? Or is it a company of those who have accepted, on external authority, cut and dried dogmatic formulas as a substitute for thinking? Or what is it? This uncertainty makes it hard for Tom, Dick and Harry to know what relationship the Church *may possibly have* to morals or to him or to anything else.

It would be well if we were again to make plain the view of the Church held by the vast majority of Christians since that Church began. The Church, in the estimation of its members, has been *a society of those who, having accepted the Christ as Lord and God in human terms, have been organically united to Jesus, that they may struggle closer to God by virtue of that supernatural strength which He imparts.* The thing that primarily matters about historic Christianity is not its dogmatic faith, for that is only an intellectual re-

flection upon the life lived with Christ within His Body; nor is it the Christian order, with episcopacy and priesthood and the like, for those are merely the mechanical contrivances normally necessary for the preservation of life with Christ within His Body. The thing that matters is *the life itself, life within a supernatural organism* composed of those called to be the Christ's, *a society in the world and yet not of it.* That needs preaching.

These, then, are the three elements involved; morals, the man in the street, the historic Church. How do they usually fit together? How ought they to be fitted together?

The relationship ordinarily existing may be put in a few short sentences. The man in the street is the hedonistic gentleman we have described, and he conforms to the ethical standards of society about him without much question, easily perceiving, as he does so, that those standards are no longer the ethical standards of the Church. He commonly supposes that the Church's ethics differ from the ethics of his world merely by being old-fashioned and outmoded natural ethics. It almost never occurs to him that the Church's ethics may really be supernatural ethics, adapted to the attainment of supernatural ends, while secular ethics are natural ethics, adopted for merely natural ends. Because he fails to see this, the ethical teachings of the Church seem to him at the best negligible, at the worst a hindrance to reasonable progress.

The ideal relationship is far different. The man in

the street may possibly be helped to see that the moral standards of his secular group are, it is true enough, one thing and the moral standards of Christ's Church quite another thing; but that they differ from one another *because the aim in life presupposed in each is different.* He ought to be helped to see that it may be all right to conform to the world's standards, if the good offered to those who do conform seems a sufficient good; but that, if he deems the good offered by Christ's Church to be better and more satisfying than that offered by the world, then he must in reason adopt the quite different moral standards of that society which is pursuing those higher ends. He may possibly be brought to see that the goods offered by the world of our day are almost wholly animal: food, shelter, opportunity for procreation, comfort, security, admiration of one's fellows; and that only if these seem adequate ends may the game be played according to the rules laid down by the world. He may possibly also be persuaded—he is sure to find it out to his great cost, in the end—that these animal goods are relatively unimportant and humanly inadequate; that what the wise man seeks is nothing less than a sense of unity with Reality, without which the possession of all things else matters very little indeed; that man is really thirsty for God, lonely for God; and that, since this is so, the mystical body of God may properly claim, as the price of the Bread of Life, a moral living quite its own, a unique ethic.

If the man in the street can get it through his head

that Christian ethics and natural ethics are two different things, get it out of his head that Christian ethics are merely old-fashioned while natural ethics are new-fashioned, get it into his head that the Church's ethics are for those who seek God as the highest and only satisfying good, *and for nobody else*, a vast confusion may immediately be resolved. Unless we do enable him to see this, Christian ethics have not a ghost of a chance to prevail.

An illustration may be helpful. Whenever morality is discussed nowadays, the argument almost always resolves itself into talk about matters connected with the seventh commandment. While we may deplore this tendency to limit good or bad living to the relationship of the sexes and to regard fornication as vastly worse than pride, vain glory and hypocrisy—a thoroughly vicious seeing things out of focus, yet we may well take sex for an example. It excellently illustrates the point being made. In respect to sex, anyone with half an eye can see both that natural morality differs from Christ's morality and also that the difference is due to a variant definition of man and his highest good.

When people believe, as a matter of course, that a man is an immortal soul lodged within a body, they also believe that in matters of sex the interest of the soul is more worth conserving than the interest of the body. There was a time when most people in Europe and America thought that way, and when in consequence secular law sought to ensure just that. Such was not the case in the world to which Christ

came and to which Paul preached. It is not the case in the world at the present moment. Nowadays, most people do not believe any such thing about man and his highest destiny; and prevailing sexual customs have changed accordingly. Man may be a super-beast, people suppose nowadays, but he is essentially a beast. Because they think it, the impulse toward chastity and monogamy loses force. Chastity is not an animal virtue and never was, nor is monogamy a necessary arrangement for the handling of an animal family. If man is only a socialized beast, if his highest goods are animal goods, there is not the slightest reason why companionate marriage, so-called, or some other form of thinly disguised promiscuity, should not prevail. The same sort of argument is in some degree applicable not only to problems of sex but to those of property, nationality, force and freedom, and the rest. *Christian morals seem foolish to a world which has lost sight of Christian ends.*

What are Christians to do about it? Nothing can be done about it as long as the people at large believe that man is only a higher animal. When the Church and her ecclesiastics thunder against the new secularist modes and codes of conduct, unless they make it plain that they are speaking of wisdom for those who as their chief end are seeking God, and that they are not trying to coerce into Christian conduct people who care nothing about the Christ or his definition of man, she and her officers, in the eyes of the world at large, seem to be advocating merely something which was and now is not, and that only on the

ground that the old is better. That sort of argument gets nowhere.

In matters of sex, and in all other phases of conduct, the prime necessity is that we should make plain that *Christian morals are for Christians.* They never were formulated for people without the wit to desire, here and hereafter, Eternal Life with God. We may as well abandon any attempt to make people live like Christians when they are not Christians or to preserve a Christian civilization without a popular belief in that God-search which alone justifies a Christian civilization or the Christian moral struggle. To ask worshippers of Mammon to live lives of sacrifice, to expect devotees of Venus to be chaste, to hope that people whose real God is comfort at any price will suffer gladly for the truth, is grotesque. There are still those who will listen if one talks bravely of an ascetic morality, practised in order that men may see God; but most sane people simply ignore a hesitant, conformist type of Christian ethics which wails because worldly people have worldly morals,—the sort which says: "You are animals, of course. That is a scientific fact. But do not act like animals, you naughty boys and girls." For that sort of thing the world at large has a healthy and proper disrespect.

To preserve Christian morals in England, it is required that the present generation of pagan Englishmen, pagan Englishwomen and pagan English children shall be converted to Christianity. The same thing is true of Christian morals in other lands. It

will not do to wring our hands and say "Tut! Tut!" or even "Dear! Dear!" It will not do merely to preach about it, however earnestly, to the minor fraction of the people which still attends divine worship. The appeal to respectability, also, will not work. It is now entirely respectable to be, from a Christian standpoint, definitely immoral. Men and women must be converted or their morals will be less and less Christ's morals.

The Christians of England do not as yet understand this. They do not see, as continentals or Americans more clearly see, that a nation which is not Christian will not live Christian-like, that Christianity is in every land a minority movement fighting for its life, that our fathers and we have lost the world to Christ and that we and our children must win it back again, at cost of sweat and tears. Can Englishmen convert their pagan country? Can Americans convert theirs? Or Canadians theirs, or Australians theirs, or South Africans theirs? If not, there is nothing we can do but look on helplessly while the men and women and children for whom Christ died throw their lives away, in secularist fashion, as water to no purpose is poured out on the ground,—and while the nation and the empire and the international world become increasingly insecure for lack of a sense of commonwealth. It is not enough that we should trust the State. It is not enough that we should trust moral conventions. The State must itself be redeemed; and the human aims and objectives which once produced conventional codes must be rediscovered.

That is no easy task. Meanwhile, until we gain once more some knowledge of ourselves, we walk a perilous path, groping in an ever-greater darkness toward—only God knows what disaster.

V

AGAIN TOWARD GOD

MANY PEOPLE have for a long time held aloof from the Christian adventure because they have had an uncomfortable feeling that somehow or other Christianity, and Theism in general, are fighting today a losing battle against modern scientific and speculative thought—that the Church's fundamental teachings about both God and man grow more and more intellectually insecure with every passing year. They regret this. They are disturbed at the possible ethical results of weakened religious sanctions. They do not find any too delightful even the hope of attaining a secularist paradise. They tremble, not merely at the thought of the world at large without a spiritual hope, but also at a footless existence in such a world for themselves and their children. They dread a life with mysticism psychologized away and romance reduced to a sublimation of sex-desire. Such a world seems a world intolerable; and yet to many, it has seemed a world inevitable. No honest man dares to resist the truth; and if the experts—the scientists and the philosophers—have indeed been compelled to abandon the idea of God, we feel that we must in all honesty also give up religious convictions and hopes and practices, however dear.

We have become discouraged about religion and about the Church, whose business it is to preserve and teach religious truth and to dispense God's grace to men. We have long felt, perhaps, more than a little unwilling to make for such an enterprise real sacrifices—financial or otherwise. Why do it if the whole thing is on the down grade toward oblivion? We have become, possibly, a little bit ashamed of being seen at divine worship, and particularly at the Altar. No one wishes to advertise that he is in obscurantist disagreement with attitudes which pass for being up-to-date. We have been hesitant about teaching religion to our children. Why bother them with it if its day—alas—is nearly done? This is truly the reason why the churches have grown feeble and ever more feeble, year by year, during this twentieth century—more the reason, often, than we have been willing to acknowledge.

We have tried to bolster them up by forums and social service and other such devices, curiously blind to the fact that what is the matter is not so much that we will not apply Christianity as that we have doubt about whether, in a modern-thinking world, there is possible any such thing as Christianity to apply. We have sought at almost any cost to combine the sectarian fragments of Christendom, which would be entirely admirable except that we approach the problem of divinity too often in a spirit of despair, hoping against hope that the fragments may by combination seem less faithless than they actually are to God and the divine adventure. We have organized revivals,

promotion campaigns, nation-wide endeavours, forward movements, every-member canvasses, seeking thereby to sell to the world and to ourselves goods of the value of which we have had increasing doubt. With earnestness, too, we have urged ourselves and others honestly to inquire what is the will of God for each of us in his or her own life. That last is good; but what of him—his name is legion—who has all the while in the back of his head more than a suspicion that no longer is it really possible to believe that there is a God at all or, if there be one, that He can any more be thought to care about this little globe and its microscopic inhabitants, or be supposed to hold any one of us morally responsible. The chief trouble with the churches is that their people are filled with a dreadful fear that they may, by belief and adoration and appeal for God's grace, be behaving in a manner slightly ridiculous. If the churches expect ever to recover from their present state of semi-bankrupt lethargy, they must get at the heart of this matter.

Our real concern is with Theology, which means the operation of man's reason on the problem of the nature of God, the related problem of the nature of man, and with Apologetic, which means how to relate the truth of God to the most that science can reveal of the nature of things. We must find once more a basis for belief and loyalty. Until that be re-established, other efforts will come to nothing much. Not that everyone should be urged painstakingly to examine into these fundamental

things. Most people have neither the time nor the kind of mind for such studies. But leaders must do it, fearlessly examining modern thought in the light of God, that they may bring home to the honest and simple Christian a sense of reassurance and confidence.

We have not many such leaders. The reverend clergy seem often even more scared than the laity. So fearful are too many of the cloth of seeming behind the times, that they rush prematurely to agree with every new scientific hypothesis, even with those hypotheses which contradict one another; and to hail each current philosophic guess, often more sure of it than the philosopher who hesitantly has advanced it. I have discovered that the thinkers of to-day—the really great ones—seem to have far less use for too eager Modernists than for the cautious, well-trained and more conservative theologians. "I am tired," once said an eminent physicist to me at a dinner table, "of Modernist parsons who think that scientists know everything. They are even more silly than the Fundamentalists who think that scientists know nothing." Moreover, the clergy are commonly better trained in the minutiæ of technical Biblical criticism than they are in the problems of modern knowledge and the relationship thereunto of faith. They also, too often, are well grounded not in their own proper science, but rather in "religious education" and "Christian social service," which have been defined, by an eminent English scholar now resident in America, as follows: "Religious Education is the art of imparting

to other people what you no longer believe yourself"; and " Christian social service is the advocated application by society at large of ethical principles the validity of which the individual—because he does not fear God—is unwilling to acknowledge in his personal life."

Still, the clergy should not unduly be blamed for their quite apparent lack of interest in Theology and Apologetic. An over-modest laity has not made strongly enough upon them theological and apologetic demands. Let the laity say, "Parson, stop for a while all this talk of secondary things. You ask us to apply religion. We are not certain we have any to apply. You ask us to advance the Kingdom. We are not sure there is a King. You ask us to serve God. Is there one? You ask us to exhibit a sense of moral responsibility. Is such a thing compatible with a deterministic Science? Teach us the Faith and show how it can exist in conformity with knowledge. Get down to business, padre." If the laity said that to the clergy, there would be more religious examination of the facts about contemporary thought and more effective teaching of the Faith. Men and women need encouragement in believing.

Encouragement is what would ensue for, as a matter of cold fact, the world of thought has not moved away from theistic belief this past twenty-five years, but toward it.

Does that sound incredible? Look at all we read, one may say, and even more, at all that is implied in the daily papers—news columns, feature columns,

and editorials. Look at what is revealed in most of the more popular magazines. They all indicate that more and more the world of thought has moved forever away from the superstition of God. Let it be at once freely admitted that journalists and the more popular literary lights do mostly take that line. And look, one may go on, at what happens to young men and women at the universities. They commonly come back filled with a patronizing scorn for the Church and God; and surely they learn all this from their informed instructors. Those instructors seem anything but helpful in imparting an enthusiasm for the spiritual venture. It must be quite frankly acknowledged that the average instructor in university circles is indifferent to religion, when he is not contemptuous of it. But it is hardly wise, in estimating trends of thought, to take too seriously either the literary gentlemen or those persons, of necessity imitative and second-rate, who do the greater part of the teaching of those mobs of students that throng the homes of the more or less higher learning. There are not enough real thinkers to go round. Besides, most real thinkers are persuaded that teaching interferes with true scholarship, and not without justification, when one remembers what teaching involves in modern mass-production education. Such persons as the literary journalists and the common run of university teachers, it should always be remembered, do little more than reflect certain intellectual tendencies which *have been.*

The real thinkers, in any age, are few in number.

Thought trends are set in motion by these original minds. A generation later what they think, is the common possession of more numerous but for the most part lesser disciples whom they have taught. A little later still, the general crowd becomes aware of what those imitative minds have diligently been repeating. Neither the opinion of the average man in the street nor that of the intellectual popularizer, indicates the direction of thought movement in any given day. The things which everyone is saying now, merely represent what the thinkers were saying twenty-five years ago. The average man of to-day has only lately begun to catch up with what were the daring and original ideas at about the turn of the century.

Meanwhile, the thinkers have not stopped thinking. The able few have gone on examining and reasoning. What they think now, will percolate down into the undergraduate colleges and the popular periodicals fifteen or twenty years from now, and into the popular mind by, say, about 1960. When we examine the utterances of the *leaders* of thought to-day, we who believe in God and have regard for the Faith of the ages have every reason to feel a considerable encouragement. Not all the great ones are in agreement. They differ widely as they approach the problems of life and thought. But, nevertheless, certain helpful tendencies appear plainly in what they write and say. There cannot be given in this brief chapter an adequate description of all the changing currents and emphases. All that one can do here is to notice three quite perceptible trends.

First. Whereas in 1900, or thereabout, it was assumed by many leading thinkers that science could give an adequate knowledge of the universe, without the aid of an interpreting faith of any sort, very few scientists of repute would defend that position today. Reputable science, in the hands of its outstanding leaders, no longer makes an attempt to explain anything. As Sir James Jeans has said, "It is now a full quarter of a century since physical science, largely under the leadership of Poincaré, left off trying to explain phenomena, and resigned itself merely to describing them in the simplest way possible. . . . It does not matter much . . . whether . . . such an explanation corresponds to any thinkable ultimate reality. The formulæ of modern science are judged mainly, if not entirely, by their capacity for describing the phenomena of nature with simplicity, accuracy and completeness."[1]

In other words, science no longer attempts to deal, by affirmation or denial, either with possible immaterial realities or with value and meaning. It has nothing rightly to say about ideas or absolutes: nothing about Truth *per se*, or Beauty, or Goodness. It is itself no guide in Epistemology (the study of the nature of knowledge itself) or Æsthetics, or Morals. Personality (human or divine) is out of its province. Science is concerned only with the observation and classification of physical phenomena. It is not the theologian who is compelled to say this nowadays; the scientists themselves insist upon it. They turn

[1] Jeans, *The Universe Around Us*, p. 329.

over to the Arts, to Religion and to Philosophy, the study of all other experiences and the interpretation thereof—modestly saying that about these things scientific method gives no clues. They must, indeed, be studied; but they must be studied *extra-scientifically*.

It is hard to over-estimate the importance, in the promotion of Religion, of this shift in scientific point of view. When the change becomes more generally known, Religion can no longer be regarded by anybody—not even by a university undergraduate, not even by a Russian communist—as a negligible factor in giving to man true knowledge of the nature of things and their significance.

Almost as important, perhaps even more important, is the *second* trend to be noted, namely, a decline of "evolutionary optimism."

The man in the street is still convinced that everything, by the nature of nature, is getting better and better with the mere passage of time. He is convinced that there is such a thing as cosmic Progress. This was a common article of faith with the Victorian scientists; but almost no scientist of note in this day believes in any such thing. Most astronomical physicists—and they set the pace in scientific thought at the moment—seem convinced that the physical universe is running down like a clock. Slowly but surely, energy is dissipated—and all matter is energy. Physically, everything is *moving*, but to an inevitable annihilation. And those scientists who would avoid this, do so only by postulating a universe which

expands and contracts, is wound up and runs down, over and over again, to no purpose and *with no progress*. It is true that living things do develop by that progressive adaptation to environment which is usually called "evolution": but what does that matter, if the environment itself is slowly but surely approaching destruction. Life, adapting itself, will perish too. And life anyway seems, physically considered, to be a sort of accident, of small importance in the vast heavens.

It is not in progress that meaning lies, but only in the possibility of some sort of Cosmic Artificer who wound, or winds, the universe up for some good purpose known to Him, and in the existence of human spirits, temporarily incarnate in the universe, capable of achieving significance in terms of comradeship with that Cosmic Artificer.

Of course, about such things as these, Science can say nothing at all. That is the business of Religion. But the point is that really modern Science knows nothing of happy and inevitable development in the universe or of any growing or evolutionary meaning in physical things. The idea of cosmic Progress is, with physicists of repute, as dead as the dodo-bird. If one reasons out the philosophical implications of a Science that is *really* modern—assuming that religion has nothing to contribute—one must and will end in complete despair. Man must turn to Religion for such measure of truth about the universe or about himself as makes it tolerable to think at all.

A man may mean something in terms of God and

the spiritual life, or else he has no meaning, now or ever. The old deterministic progression toward an ever-better future is an exploded superstition, to those who really understand their astro-physics. Somehow one cannot but remember Jesus' words: "Take no thought for to-morrow. To-morrow will take thought for the things of itself." Minds off the future of things! That does not matter. Put no trust in next year or in the next century or in the next millennium. There is *now*, and nothing else, in terms of which to live. Building for the future is a fool's philosophy. Get to the heart of *now*. The way to Reality is not through the present to the future but through phenomena to meaning, through flesh to spirit, through things to God. *Aut Deus aut nullus.*

There is not time here with justice to describe, even with brevity, a *third* modern trend which is favourable to Religion. That is the movement away from the explanation of man himself—the explanation which used to be common among thinkers and still is common in popular prejudice—as merely a more clever animal; the turning away from the naturalistic humanology of Rousseau, Voltaire, Chateaubriand, Herder, Fichte, Hegel, J. S. Mill and the rest. Bertrand Russell still adheres to it, but with complete despair about the future of man. John Dewey has impressed many people as one still believing in it—though he is always obscure, and of late seems a bit horror-stricken at the excesses of his disciples in denying reality to the extra-animal elements in man. Our better thinkers, taking them as a whole,

reject that idea. Man has rational, logical faculties and capacities for spiritual contacts, which are not beastly at all. That newer movement toward an older humanology is so well known by now, in America and even more in England, that it is not necessary more than to mention it. Suffice it to say that if any man today insists, "I am only a more canny animal, and will live like one until I die, and that is the end," he has against him almost all the best speculative thinkers of this generation.

Every one of these three current tendencies of thought throws man squarely back on the need of God. Knowledge lies not alone in scientific fact, but in Him who is behind the facts. Destiny lies not in the progress of things, but in fulfilling the purpose of Him who wills them. Man arrives at happiness not in terms of animal performance, but in knowing God and enjoying him for ever. These trends make it ever easier for the man who thinks, to be also the man who worships. Let the ignorant populace shout their crudities. The thinking world has moved away from what they know. The world of real thinking—of the deepest-probing scientists and the shrewdest philosophers—moves toward a necessary Theism, not away from it. It is indeed so. If then, we are wise people, we shall not despair in the least about the future of Religion.

We should not, of course, be blind to the grave difficulties which may face us in the interim, before the ideas of the leading minds of the moment have sifted down to the populace at large. There can be no

doubt that the majority of the common folk to-day are riding naturalism for all it is worth, and toward a grievous fall. Men, long told that they are only beasts, have begun to act like little more than beasts and will continue for some time, perhaps more and more, to do so. Our economic structure has already begun to crack under the pressure of long-continued greed. So largely has a sense of personal integrity and moral responsibility disappeared, that democracy seems to have deteriorated into a sort of anarchy. Dictatorships appear, which destroy liberty, in order, so they say, to preserve the social fabric at all; but the dictatorships seem mostly to be as little concerned as our pseudo-democracies with more than preserving an animal security. The higher and more human values are by them, too, mostly overlooked. This is true to the largest degree in Russia, and least in Italy; but largely everywhere. Nor are the super-animal elements in the emerging reconstruction in the United States, one is apt to feel, much recognized or appreciated by the American people at large. Moral standards in the home and social life, as well, disintegrate rapidly. The arts become more and more frankly gross. Culture—which is based on human interests—rapidly disappears before a strident boorishness. Reason is quite gone out of fashion; prejudice has taken its place.

In this current degeneration, Religion—which ever requires the subordination of the animal impulses to the more human desires—the desire for meaning and the desire for love that is more than lust—is naturally

unfashionable, and probably sure for a time to become more so. It may quite possibly be that, before people come to their senses, cupidity will well-nigh have destroyed business, fanaticism will have suppressed calm judgment, force will have made reasoning a pastime to be followed secretly; and war—which is always born of animal desire—may have drenched the world again in blood and tears. It may even be that, as in Russia so elsewhere, Religion may be compelled to take once more to the catacombs. Men's hearts fail them for fear for what is coming on the earth.

These things may, indeed, possibly come to pass, and in the near future; but such a debacle does not seem inevitable. The tide has already turned. The leading minds are no longer mechanistic, merely naturalistic. Again the word goes forth that *man is more than beast*, that society is more than a congeries of greedy individuals and classes, that human values yet remain to be respected and furthered, that the sum and author of those values, God, may still be sought diligently and, when found, adored even by the most intelligent. There remain in Israel millions of simple souls, of course, who have never bowed the knee to Baal; and now among those millions, sympathetic more and more toward their basic affirmations, are many of the greatest scientists and philosophers in all our world. It was not so a generation ago. It is so now.

The tide has turned, out at sea. Soon the swollen flood of carnality will begin to ebb, first in the bay and

then in all the inlets. As it subsides, there will be much to repair: fair fields ruined, homes wrecked, good folk invalid, and ancient landmarks washed away. Much that the fathers builded with great pains, the children must rebuild. But the tide has turned. And we begin to know that when the waters have done their worst and gone, in the fair new world to be remade, there will be the churches, better, more noble for the lesson that Churchmen, in common with the rest of men, will have learned; and in these churches the ancient mysteries will be exalted, children will be taught, and strong men and women will kneel in adoration, while God, as He is ever wont, will feed the human soul.

VI

TWO PATHS TO REALITY

I HAVE LATELY been in receipt of a communication from an undergraduate woman in a certain university, which is not only interesting in itself but symptomatic of a state of mind quite common among a generation that has been brought up to know only a naturalistic world. She first expresses the hope that, as a Christian teacher, I may understand youth enough neither to flatter it nor to fear it. "We young people," the letter goes on, "have not merely avidity, but inexperience too; our faith in ourselves is probably as foolish as the caution of our fathers; and we are always too desirous of simplifying what the gods have made complex. This, you seem somehow to understand." Then she comes to her immediate difficulty.

She says that she and many of her friends are weary of the vagueness about everything which comes from disbelief in God, and tired of the notion that in morals man is only a more clever animal. They feel, she says, that if life is to be tolerable they must have some grounds of certainty, some sure goal to pursue. In her university, she is at a loss to whom to turn for guidance. The philosophic tutors seem to her like the men who went to sea in a tub; their craft will not steer. The spiritual leaders round about the quads

impress her as so intent on applying religion to problems of ownership, nationality, race and what not, that they ignore the fact, frequently embarrassing to parsons, that these undergraduates have next to no religion to apply, and are questioning the validity of the little they do possess. She writes to me because my sort of Christians seem to her, so she says, to have arrived at a certain peace without ceasing to be free citizens of the twentieth century. She asks that I will tell her "in elementary terms" about how a man or woman of her generation may perhaps "approach the whole matter of coming to know God," so that they may attain a spiritual freedom.

It is a large demand, but one quite legitimate. If I am indeed a Christian, it is my business to be able to tell to her and her friends, to tell to myself, to tell to them who read this book, how to approach God and the certainty that is of and in Him. Without those things, man is a truth-seeker lost in a morass of meaningless becoming. It is impossible to conceive of a more helplessly tragic figure than that, or one more futile. Yes, Christians must expect to be called on, by puzzled youth and disillusioned age alike, for exactly the sort of guidance that my correspondent seeks. In response, they must formulate and seek to express the Faith with the best simplicity and honesty they have within them. It will not do to talk only about the incidentals of religion, its ornaments, its proprieties, its dogmas, even its consequences, to a world that is asking with a desperate sort of urgency whether there is a God at all Who may be found by man.

There are two pathways by one or both of which a human being may come to God, for the avoiding of futility, self-pity and despair. There is the path along which he searches for love and the path along which he seeks for meaning. The one path is primarily of the emotions, though it has enough of reason in it to enable us to analyse and weigh our loves; the other is primarily of the mind, though there must be in it, too, an emotional drive that makes us not merely think about an answer to the riddle of life, but also passionately desire such an answer. The first is the pathway of the mystic; the second, the pathway of the theologian.

The mystic way attracts more people to God than does the other. The logical and theological approach to God is not the way by which many men arrive at faith. The mind, God can indeed feed. Theology does greatly matter, but usually only to those whose love has first been won. Sometimes that hunger for affection is a thing suspected and even despised by those who are intellectually proud, and especially by those whose pride is the pride of youth. Such people keep crying out that only by clear reason will they approach the problem of God. They will not love until they have intellectually understood. To them we can only reply, "We are willing enough to reason with you about God; but you must not despise heart hunger. Only the inexperienced do that. The discipline of love is a real discipline, and revealing of Reality." The mystic is not an obscurantist, but only a man who has a high regard for facts. The way of the head is

not to be ignored; but it is not the only way, nor the way of primary importance. Most of those who find God do so by way of hunger of the heart and where it ends. Even the brainiest, the most coldly intellectual of us, as well as those more ignorant and simple, know that hunger of the heart, which nothing, no one, seems competent to satisfy.

Between human beings in their loves, as persons of insight well understand, there are always canyons of division which may not be bridged. Lover reaches out toward mistress and she to him, but never wholly to find; husband and wife partly, but never completely, know unity of self in self; parents and children remain aliens, for all they care and try to understand; the dearest friends not only must part, but never meet. How much easier it would be if in our lives we were only animals, content with casual physical contacts, content across the sexes to mate and procreate and let it go at that! But because we are human, we cannot be so modest in our demand.

Perhaps we try to be, and say, "Oh well, there is for me no true romance, in the sense that once I hoped there was, but only something less, much less. Though less, what exists is far from unlovely. I shall make the best of it." But we are not satisfied with that compromise. Perhaps we think that a new human love will give what old ones do not give. We try, only to find that new loves are very like the old ones after all. Let us not minimize the beauty of human affections; they are wondrous fine, especially when from them we do not expect the impossible: but they leave

us heart-hungry just the same. We must, to attain happiness in love, lose ourselves in someone who will let us give our all; and such a one we do not find. We keep on searching, asking always for the Perfect Lover.

The only Perfect Lover is God. Unless God be found, man sinks back at last from his search for heart's desire, unsatisfied. How most pathetic it is, of all fates, to give up search for love! And how many men and women round about us have come to that fate—faint shadows of the men and women they once were! It is not a necessary fate. God can love and be loved with a love that is complete! For this end we were made, that through the discipline of human loving we might come to know at last the love of God—as Francis Thompson, for example, knew it when, after search for satisfaction in nature and in people, and flight from God through many weary years, in the end he heard God say:

"All which I took from thee I did but take,
Not for thy harms,
But that thou mighest seek it in My arms.
All which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp my hand, and come!"[1]

How may one the most easily and surely come, come early enough in life to avoid the long, lean years of loneliness, to God who satisfies the hungry heart? It is by humbleness that one must come, and then most readily by Sacrament.

[1]From "The Hound of Heaven."

No one, we may be quite sure, has ever found God's love until he has known how undeserving he is of any love at all. With another human being there is always in one's love an element of self-esteem. "After all," says a man, "I, who love this woman, know well enough her imperfection. That does not make me care for her the less; but it does make me know that I am not myself, in turn, wholly unworthy of her love for me." And she says the same of him. So it always is in our human contacts. If a lover were, indeed, perfection, and yet poured compassion on poor us, knowing well our faults and making them as though, in a flood of understanding, they were not, how free, how happy we could be in such a loving! There is no human being who can love and be loved so. But that is indeed the way God loves. Until, in all humility, I know my worthlessness, I cannot know His love at all. This, too, Francis Thompson understood quite well, and put into God's mouth true words, words of great beauty:

"Strange, piteous, futile thing,
Wherefore should any set thee love apart . . .?
And human love needs human meriting:
How hast thou merited . . .?
Alack, thou knowest not
How little worthy of any love thou art!
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee,
Save Me, save only Me?"

It is hard, you say, for men and women of to-day to feel that. They are too much possessed by a carefully inculcated conceit. We are often told that this

is the case; but is it really so? Most of us know moments—and those our most real moments—when, undisturbed by others, we have the company only of our own souls. Then it is we know how weak we are, how ignorant, how absurd, and how alone. Then indeed one says, "What am I, O God, that Thou shouldest love me? If Thou lovest me not, I am indeed face to face with the ultimate disaster; but I dare not ask that Thou shouldest care." And then God says, "I care."

It is after such moments that one knows the need of Sacrament as well as sermon, of Sacrament more than sermon. For what are sermons but groping talk about the things that are beyond all words? Sermons help the reason, it may be, sometimes; but they do not feed the heart. God alone can do that, and God is found most simply in a sacrament.

I come alone within the silent church, and I know that He is present. Not in some mighty cataclysm has He come, but simply and in kindliness, as once He came to Bethlehem long ago. Here He waits for me. I need not try to pray, to put my love in words. He knows without my speaking. Again I come, when the church is full of folk, busy with pageantry and ceremony—concourse of noble sound, smell of sweet incense—while Jesus the King is lifted high, He who for love of me has lived my life and died as I shall die, and lives and loves; and, prostrate, I adore. Again I come in the morning, early, and at the altar lift my body to receive God's Body, body to Body in a noble purity, spirit to Spirit in a great simplicity.

Thus through true adoration love for God grows day by day.

His love for me, it cannot grow, nor need it grow. He loved me when, being yet unformed, I lay in the womb of my mother. He loved me when in former years I did deny Him. He loved me when I forsook Him for the gardens of the Beast. He has always loved me. I do indeed love Him; but I am still a neophyte, a foolish child. *My* love *must* grow. I do not know that it will ever grow until it is a love like His for me. I think it is not possible. But at least it does become a little more like His as time goes on; and most it grows from Him in that great Feast which weary pilgrims love. And as I come to love Him more, I find somehow that He and I love everyone. This way lies joy!

At the conclusion of the Gospel according to St. John, there is one of the most beautiful chapters in the Bible. In it peace follows stress and turmoil. The agony of God's Compassion in the night before he was betrayed, as John has described it, is indeed an agony—the Lord's prayers surging forth in pulsing intercession from a heart torn with struggle. Then follows the tragedy of Calvary, heart-breaking intensity. Then comes the ecstacy of Easter. And then at the end—consummate artistry—a lovely, quiet pastoral. The resurrected Lord meets His pupils beside a lake in Galilee. He summons them ashore from their fishing. He has cooked a meal for them over the coals. "Sit down, that we may eat together," He says. After dinner, around the fire, in that April

countryside, Jesus turns to Peter. "Simon," He says, "do you love Me?" Peter looks on Him whom a fortnight since he did three times deny. "Lord, you know I love you." There is a moment of silence. Then says Jesus, "Feed My sheep."

That is the end of the Gospel. In more senses than one, that is the end of the Gospel. That is what religion means when one comes at last to understand it. For that, God has made us; for that, Jesus has suffered; for that, He has died; for that, He has even now the wound-prints in His hands and feet and side: that of each man, when the fullness of time has come, He may ask, "Do you love Me?" and that He may hear the answer, "Lord, you know I love you." Jesus had loved Simon until Simon fell in love with Him. So may it be with God and us!

But there is also the second pathway, not to be forgotten, the way to God that is of the head. Let us now think of God as the answer to man's quest for meaning.

That is a harder thing to do—not because the pathway is any the less sure than that of the heart, or the solution of life's mystery by affirmation of God other than logically inevitable; but because, while mysticism calls for poetry, theology must be expressed in prose. Prose is pedestrian and uninspiring; if you will, prose is prosaic. Mysticism, of which one must speak in poetry, is an adventure—the quest of the Holy Grail; but Theology, of which one speaks in prose, is more like a homely walk of an afternoon in common countryside. Parsifal, the mystic, comes

at last to Montserrat and finds the spell of God and Heaven's high house. The theological Christian comes in from the garden and has his tea; but there, too, by the fireside, are God and His peace. It may be that Montserrat and the chimney-corner are one and the same place, after all.

The two roads, though different, lead at last to the same God, the only God,—the God who is the answer to man's need. Sometimes the mystical Christians distrust the theological Christians, as the Augustinians (who were mystics) distrusted the great St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. Often the theological Christians are wary of the mystics, as Paul Elmer More is now. But there need be no such mutual suspicion. Christianity is big enough to include those who come to God by either path, and to harmonize them once they have come. Christ proves to be the Way, in answer to the groping of the hungry heart; and also the Truth, in answer to the questing mind. To both alike He is the Life, the only life worth living.

Only a simpleton would be rash enough to attempt to give an irrefutable argument which ends in God, all in one brief chapter of a little book like this one. In theology, as in all thinking, we must take our time. Theology is bread, as Mysticism is wine. Too suddenly to be a Mystic may make one giddy; too quickly to gorge Theology gives one spiritual indigestion. We must make our way by patient reasoning, reasoning from the world and its tragedy to God, Who, it turns out, is Himself the beginning and the

end, the meaning of phenomena and the solution of all mysteries. Such reasoning takes time.

That is why, in the nervous days we have been going through for fifty years or so just past, so many people have become impatient with Theology. It is rather unreasonable, when one stops to consider it, to have expected that a man of the period now ending should have done much reputable thinking. What could the theological approach to God have meant to a generation such as ours has been? Suppose a master theologian did come along and say to someone: "My son, my daughter, I and my predecessors in this science have for many generations devoted ourselves to a study of all that is and of man within the universe. Out of all that patient thinking has come a thing called Christian philosophy, *philosophia perennis*. If you will take the time and trouble to examine the facts with me and follow the argument, you will find it interesting, and see, too, that it does get somewhere."—By that time the busy citizen was miles away. "What a stodgy business is Theology!" said he. For it was the essence of modernity—was, be it noted, for such modernity is dead, though unhappily not as yet decently interred,—that it must have its love so fiery that it burned itself quickly to ashes and its wisdom so compact that it could be absorbed in one gulp. People have not cared much of late about Theology, *because they have not really cared about the Truth.*

But there are signs among us of a returning sanity. Our elder brothers may have been content to rush on madly, asking neither why nor whither. They forgot

how to reason, how to see below the obvious surface of things; and they engulfed all values in an incredible vulgarity. Somehow it seems that, for all their Philistine energy, they arrived nowhere much. As for us, we cannot believe in such an absurd way of living, however much we may be urged thereunto. We are learning with joy once more to sit around and think: to think about ourselves, and the rest of the folks, and the beautiful, strange earth; of how, touching that earth, we find that for all its loveliness it brings us sorrow; of how, as we hold it, it slips between our fingers; of how all things most plainly are, yet nothing seems to last; of how man is born and starts at once to die: to think of what may be the Cause of things, and the End for which they exist. And as we sit and think, the scholar in his study and the monk slowly pacing the cloister at meditation time do seem to have been quite sensible people after all, and the heritage of wisdom they have left possibly well worth our examining.

Did they reason their way out of chaos of mind to order and peace, as they say they did? Did they find that behind changing phenomena is a changeless Being that includes and shapes all and gives it meaning? Did they perceive that, though things be mutable, though they be never complete, behind them and through them and beyond them is Something, of which they are perhaps a handiwork, that is complete? Did they detect, moving amid an intricate mechanism, an ultimate devising Mind? Did they recognize that man's ability to arrive at ideas of the

True, the Good, the Beautiful, though imperfectly, imply that there is One Who perfectly distinguishes such values and, indeed, must Himself include those values? Because they understood that a self-conscious being and one competent to love is obviously greater than a thing not self-conscious and incapable of loving, did they reason that that which is—God Himself—must be personal? Did they discern, from these and many other rational examinations, that God is logically inevitable? And did they come at last to see that while the imperfect, man, obviously cannot comprehend the Perfect, God, it is entirely reasonable—and for man's salvation imperative—that God should reveal Himself in man to man?

Curious, these old ideas; and curiously sensible!

Two things need here to be added, quite briefly, about Theology.

First, no man should pay attention to Theology if he is afraid to go where logic will lead, namely to his knees at last, in devotion, and then out into life to obey. There are many, many people who do not wish to find that God is true. Life as it is without God, to be sure, leaves them unhappy; but they are frightened by the thought of what daring is involved if they are to live in a blazing conviction of God's reality. God is not for weak-spirited people. If any man comes face to face with the logical necessity of God, he must pay the price of self-surrender. If then, anyone be afraid to go whithersoever logic may lead, let him steer clear of Theology, and make fun of it all he can, whistling to keep his courage up.

And secondly, this. Logic will never make a man religious. Theology alone will never give God to him, or him to God. It will lead him to the very door, which is important enough; but there it will leave him. When he steps over the threshold, the nature of that experience may not be confined into syllogisms or clothed, indeed, with words. It was so with St. Thomas Aquinas. His was the greatest mind that ever moved in realms theological. His *Summa Theologica* remains to-day, after seven centuries, a monument of genius in argument—sound argument, sane argument. To increasing numbers of contemporary philosophers his seems the wisest thinking for the twentieth century, though he lived in the thirteenth. But toward the close of his life, something further happened. One day as he came out from offering the Holy Mysteries, he turned to his friend, Reginald, and said, "I shall write no more. I have to-day seen things which make all writing like straw." He who had proved God to the mind, and shown that in God is not only supreme Love but supreme Rationality, he who had come to God by reason, at last *knew* God face to face. So may it be with us, my brethren!

An encouraging thing about the world to-day is that increasingly men and women are awakening to an appreciation of these elements in religion which are of the mind. Our best intellects, as has been intimated heretofore, are no longer anti-God. Indeed, to proclaim one's self anti-God is to classify one's self as intellectually old-fashioned and sadly behind the times.

Not long ago I preached in the Cathedral at Winchester. All that week I had felt horribly distressed at the state of the world, and had prepared a sermon full of near despair about the future of religion. As I walked over to the Cathedral from the house of one of the Canons, I asked him if the pulpit were an ancient one. "No," he replied, "quite modern. It was put up a few years before the Reformation." I got up into that modern pulpit, only four hundred years old, while the choir was singing a hymn. I looked down on the reputed resting place of William Rufus, so wicked and blasphemous a king that, according to tradition, the tower of the Cathedral fell in on his grave. On the walls of the choir were caskets, each containing the bones of a Saxon or Danish monarch of pre-Conquest England. My eyes strayed to the south transept, stern and massive work built soon after William had arrived from Normandy. What things the building had seen! Civilizations had given way to chaos, and chaos in turn to new civilizations. The Black Death had decimated the people of England; but England had gone on. Evils had arisen; and reformations had followed. Men had forsaken the King of Heaven; and their children in a glad despair had returned to Him. Erastianism and Deist rationalism had well-nigh ruined religion; and the Evangelical and Catholic revivals had restored it. Through all this the Cathedral had stood unmoved. To it and its Lord men in the end had always come back. I was compelled to change that sermon; nor have I since forgotten. To Jesus, those who seek for

meaning in the end return. He is the Answer to the mind on quest, as also He is the sufficient Lover of heart-hungry folk. In Him the modern man can find the certainty which more and more he longs for and demands. We can return to God and sanity, and eventually we shall.

VII

REDEMPTION

JESUS THE King tells those who would be His to-day, as He has told those who in every generation have loved both Him and their fellow-men, that we are to go, in His Name and with His power to do His work, "into all the world". He means that we are thus to go not only into all parts of the planet but also into all the ramifications of the common life. In His sight time is nothing, space is nothing. There is in Him no past or present, no near or far. He is as much at home, and as much needed, on one side the world as on the other. Man is one, everywhere and always. Jesus means, "Go into homes, and into all other places where men meet together. Go into education, into schools and universities. Go into the market place and the counting house and the factory. Go into business and finance. Go into politics. Wherever men are, there go."

Now and always it is true that when, in obedience to this command, we do go into the world of natural men, we find it a world that ruins happiness, a world in which men and women woefully destroy themselves, a world wherein people do not know how to live, a world of greed and wickedness and violence and exploitation, a world of pride, vain-glory and

hypocrisy, a world of cowards and liars, a world all out-of-joint, a world without wisdom enough to avoid war or make peace, a world as incompetent as it is conceited, a world that is very ill.

What is the matter with this ailing world that the King desires to cure, that the King sends us to cure? There must be sound diagnosis before there can be helpful modification. What is the nature of the world's disease? We may know what is wrong because the Lord of Heaven has taught us; but the world does not know. The world's own most common diagnoses are worth our noting because they are diagnoses completely inadequate or mistaken, and also because they are utterly different from the diagnosis made by the Great Physician.

There are many round about who keep telling us that what is wrong is that the race of men is merely young, that after a while it will grow up, that with the passage of time will come a human maturity and that then, in a future Utopian era of justice, happiness and peace, all troubles, as it were automatically, will disappear for ever. We are assured that "the world is growing better with the passing of the years."

One wonders at the astonishing credulity displayed by that remark. The world does not improve in moral make-up with the mere passage of time. Man has not by any natural process morally changed during all recorded history. He grows, perhaps, more subtle, a bit less crude in his ways; but his destructive wickedness remains.

We are not so insular, for instance, as were our

ancestors. A great planetary unity has become ours. The world is one single scene at last. This, we are assured, is an evidence of moral progress that has come as a by-product of material development. But in spite of the new world cohesion, partly at least because of it, we had a few years back the bloodiest and most destructive war the planet has yet seen; and we have two or three more such conflicts in process of ferment now that the first world war is done. Because we know one another, it does not in the least follow that we love one another. The difficulties inherent in getting on with one's neighbours are not cured merely by acquiring more neighbours. Again, all men can read to-day, and that seems to a good many people, for some strange reason, to indicate a moral advance; but for all our reading we seem to be as prejudiced and ignorant as ever our fathers were about the things wherein lie our peace—perhaps more so, for, now that we can read, all manner of lies, half-lies and innuendoes are fed to us daily by the masters of propaganda, inflaming to foolishness and hysteria. Man has been taught to read but not to think, not properly to evaluate either facts or people. We have prolonged life and promoted physical health, which is pointed to as an evidence of increased goodliness in respect to things human; but let us not be too greatly encouraged by it. At the same time that we have reduced most sorts of disease, we have busily developed such a nervous culture as crowds to bursting the hospitals for the mentally diseased.

It will not do to say, "Be patient. The race will

improve with the passage of time." The world is ailing with no petty disease of childhood, nor are our pains mere growing pains.

What improvement there has been in human conduct,—and there has been some—has not been automatic, nor is it necessarily permanent. Every inch we have gained of ethical development has been won—and still is held—only by grim moral effort. Let the effort relax even a little and we shall revert to barbarism once more, and that with startling speed. The naïve idea held as an article of faith by the man in the street, the idea of automatic progress toward the better life, of ethical development without effort, of moral growth by some sort of painless evolution, not only is contrary to religion but—and this ought to be shouted from the house-tops—also is utterly unsupported by either reputable history or sound psychology. As a diagnosis of what is wrong with the world, as a basis for rational prescription lest the racial patient die, the appeal to a time-spun human evolution in respect to morals is of all malpractice the most socially deadly.

Nor is the other answer commonly given by the sick world in explanation of its sickness any more wise: namely, the answer that men and women are in need only of a little more factual information and some few improvements in technical training. That the world is ignorant, that it needs more factual information and better technical training, is true; but that the spread of information and the acquiring of technical facility will in themselves bring about a cure

for the deadly ailment that destroys mankind, does not follow in the least. Will mere increase of knowledge or a more skilful technology cure the world, for example, of greed? Why should we think that, when we see how almost every noble discovery of modern science has been seized upon and exploited by the unprincipled and low? Will a greater *mastery of nature* result in greater *self-mastery* by man? There is no evidence for so believing and plenty of evidence to the contrary. No, it is not ignorance that is primarily the matter. We know that when we look at ourselves. We know what we ought to be—but often we are the opposite. We know the things that we ought not to do. Yet, God forgive us, we frequently do them just the same.

Man needs an inner power, a courage, a dynamic, to enable him to be true to his own perceived good, to help him not to be a beast when he knows that he ought to be human. *The world is perishing because it is dependent on its own too small strength of character. It is power to move the will that we lack.* It seems incredible that anyone with even a slight experience of life should fail to understand that simple, patent fact.

"Who can bestow upon us that for want of which we perish?" That is the cry of man in all the ages, the cry that is behind all religion. "Who can give to us a sufficient creative moral drive?"

Jesus answers, "*I can.* I am come into this world, come from the Eternal, come that men may have life and have it more abundantly." "He was in the world," says St. John, "and the world was made by Him, and

the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But to them that received Him gave He inner authority to become the sons of God: and they were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The long record of Christian history is the tale of millions on millions of souls, in all generations, who have found those words of the Evangelist quite literally true. Jesus would save the world by imparting to it dynamic and courage, dynamic and courage as of God.

But in what manner did Jesus set about imparting this health-giving power to a world morally diseased and debilitated?

He did not begin by denouncing the sin-sick world that He would cure. He never scolded the patient. The only people to or about whom Jesus ever said a harsh word were the Pharisees; and that was because, while they were particular about everything else religious, they ignored the necessity of creative living, the challenge to do God's will no matter what it cost. In the King's own biting words, it was "for pretence that they made long prayers." Outside they appeared to be ever so clean and lovely, said Jesus; inside they were tombs full of stinking bones. Against that sort of thing He levelled the scorn of God and of an honest man; but He never condemned the sin-sick world or its weak and sordid citizens. He did not scorn even the prostitute or her customer—poor creatures. More significant still, perhaps, and worth our noting, He did not denounce even the few who

exploited the many. He knew that they were weak and foolish more often than deliberately vicious. Also He knew, well enough, that in an unredeemed world they who are exploited are not themselves apt to be any more righteous or noble than those who enslave and use them. He sought to bring about no temporary social upset. Well He knew that in a world of sick men and women a political or economic revolution in the long run turns out to be merely a device for turning a well-fed set of rascals out and putting a hungry set of rascals in. So it has ever been; so it is now. Jesus would not waste His time, nor would He have us waste ours, in such an inevitably fruitless endeavour.

Neither crimination nor empty revolt appealed to the Son of God as medicine sufficient for a world sick unto death. Rather, because He knew what is in man, He set about doing the only thing that could possibly be of any use. He would show men what a life might be if lived perfectly, strengthened completely by the power of God. He would demonstrate that what the race already knows that men ought to do and be, that same thing a human man can do and be, if only the Divine strength be freely used. He lived, for us and before us, a life completely honest, completely chaste, completely loving, completely humble, completely simple, completely sincere; completely a well-doer towards His fellows, completely a being of integrity and compassion. And He said, "With my help, you can do it too." Against a world gone wrong, for its salvation, He pitted a man gone right.

Well He knew the price that the world would exact of Him for doing it. "Men love not the light," He said, "because their deeds are of darkness." He was too great a challenge to be met with welcome or tolerant kindness. He would not conform to the world's low standards? Then would men turn on Him, the pack upon the rebel. He must at any cost be dragged down. If He would not submit He must be scorned, derided, murdered. That was what happened. He knew quite well that it would happen; that man being what he is, poor sick man, it was bound to happen. It was not only the wealthy, the exploiters, the cruelly mighty, that turned on Him. The mob turned on Him too. All forsook Him. The sin-sick world nailed the Good Physician to a Tree.

They killed Him; but they did not crush Him, nor deter Him in the least from living to the full the God-life in this world of time and space. He lives, for all they killed Him. Because He lives—undefeated, undefeatable—men and women with wit to understand have always been able to see in Him the Way, the Truth, the Life. It was so from the very first Good Friday. Hardly was breath gone out of Him before the captain of the soldiers who had executed Him was murmuring, "This was the Son of God". In all the centuries, people have turned to Him for hope and power; and He has given it to them, in the Holy Sacraments and when they prayed. Into the world He has put the only solvent of that world's woe, in our day or in any day, the grace inherent in His life, completely good.

By observing Him we come to understand, or we ought to understand, what our work, as His men, His co-physicians ministering to the world's deadly sickness, is meant day by day to be. The healing task is simple, though so difficult as to tax our entire manhood; yes, more than tax it.

We are not commanded, or permitted, to condemn the world. We may describe it and bewail its state; but we must not denounce its people. It is a sad world, a silly world, a weak world, a self-destroying world. Its economic structure, built on greed, crumbles as we gaze. Its political systems, built on a democracy of rights instead of a democracy of responsibilities, have in them the seeds of dissolution. Its only appeal from injustice is to force; its only remedy for international wrong is war, toward which it moves despite its horror. Its social pleasures and its arts are alike corrupted by carnality. Restless in pursuit of joy, its people find weariness of spirit and tension in nerves and brain. But they who are of Christ must not, for all that, condemn its people, those who fail in courage, those who for the most part know but dare not. Nor dare we be content to curse the privileged and seek merely to bring about some sort of minor revolution which will take power from the floundering but strident few who wield it now and give it to some other set of poor, weak, self-seeking men. It is a vastly deeper and more effective revolution that Christians are sent to bring about, a revolution in motivation, a revolution set going by God in human lives.

We are to help redeem the world not by prescription, not by violence of revolt, but by lives laid down for God and God's good way. A life can heal when words cannot.

We shall suffer in the doing of it. "If they have denied the Master, they will also deny the servants." The Church and Christians must expect to be hated, derided, lied about, scorned, robbed, crowned with thorns. "He who would follow Me, takes up a Cross," says Jesus. "Ye shall be hated of all men for My sake," He assures us. For right we set out to live, though the world asks wrong? For truth we wish to live, when the world demands an easy compromise and lies? For honesty we would live, in a crooked world that is on the make? Chastity we would embrace, in a world content to be lecherous? Then of course the world will hate us. It will seek to corrupt us or coerce us. Failing that, it may kill. But if it cannot defeat us, because we have lived the world may dream again old dreams of goodness. It is the only way. The sick world may need philosophers and statesmen and economists. Of course it does. But more grievously it needs some bravely honest men and women. Until such shall be made by God's good grace and by our sacrifice, all else will fail us. *Crux est mundi medicina.* The medicine of the world is a cross—His cross *and ours.*

The world lies very sick. Then says Jesus: "As My Father hath sent me, even so send I you. Go, my child, and heal it". "And with what medicine, Master, shall the world be healed?" "The medicine,

my child, of a life laid down, the medicine of a Cross." "But, my Master, must I indeed to help mankind drink with Thee the bitter draught?" "No other medication will suffice. But fear not, child, *I make the bitter waters fresh.*"

Such is the healing task. "Too much for any man," men say. They are quite right. It is too much for any man. But it is not too much for God. He gives the power; it does not lie in our poor selves. In every Sacrament, at every prayer, He gives the power.

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY THE BOWERING PRESS, PLYMOUTH